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SHELLEY'S POETICAL WORKS

VOLUME II

1



THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

GIVEN FROM HIS OWN EDITIONS AND OTHER
AUTHENTIC SOURCES

ILLUSTRATED WITH MANY MANUSCRIPTS AND WITH ALL EDITIONS
OF AUTHORITY

TOGETHER WITH HIS PREFACES AND NOTES
HIS POETICAL TRANSLATIONS AND FRAGMENTS
AND AN APPENDIX OF
JUVENILIA

EDITED BY H. BUXTON FORMAN



SECOND EDITION WITH THE NOTES OF
MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT SHELLEY

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOLUME II

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FRONTISPIECE.

SHELLEY'S GRAVE, PAINTED AND ETCHED BY W. B. SCOTT.

POSTHUMOUS POEMS,
FRAGMENTS, TRANSLATIONS,
AND JUVENILIA.

JULIAN AND MADDALO ;

A CONVERSATION.



PREFACE.

The meadows with fresh streams, the bees with thyme,
The goats with the green leaves of budding Spring,
Are saturated not—nor Love with tears.

VIRGIL'S GALLUS.

COUNT MADDALO is a Venetian nobleman of antient family and of great fortune, who, without mixing much in the society of his countrymen, resides chiefly at his magnificent palace in that city. He is a person of the most consummate genius, and capable, if he would direct his energies to such an end, of becoming the redeemer of his degraded country. But it is his weakness to be proud: he derives, from a comparison of his own extraordinary mind with the dwarfish intellects that surround him, an intense apprehension of the nothingness of human life. His passions and his powers are incomparably greater than those of other men; and, instead of the latter having been employed in curbing the former, they have mutually lent each other strength. His ambition preys upon itself, for want of objects which it can consider worthy of exertion. I say that Maddalo is proud, because I can find no other word to express the concentrated and impatient feelings which consume him; but it is on his own hopes and affections only that he seems to trample, for in social life no human being can be more gentle, patient, and unassuming than Maddalo. He is cheerful, frank, and witty. His more serious conversation is a sort of

intoxication; men are held by it as by a spell. He has travelled much; and there is an inexpressible charm in his relation of his adventures in different countries.

Julian is an Englishman of good family, passionately attached to those philosophical notions which assert the power of man over his own mind, and the immense improvements of which, by the extinction of certain moral superstitions, human society may be yet susceptible. Without concealing the evil in the world, he is for ever speculating how good may be made superior. He is a complete infidel, and a scoffer at all things reputed holy; and Maddalo takes a wicked pleasure in drawing out his taunts against religion. What Maddalo thinks on these matters is not exactly known. Julian, in spite of his heterodox opinions, is conjectured by his friends to possess some good qualities. How far this is possible the pious reader will determine. Julian is rather serious.

Of the Maniac I can give no information. He seems, by his own account, to have been disappointed in love. He was evidently a very cultivated and amiable person when in his right senses. His story, told at length, might be like many other stories of the same kind: the unconnected exclamations of his agony will perhaps be found a sufficient comment for the text of every heart.

JULIAN AND MADDALO:

A CONVERSATION.

I RODE one evening with Count Maddalo
Upon the bank of land which breaks the flow
Of Adria towards Venice: a bare strand
Of hillocks, heaped from ever-shifting sand,
Matted with thistles and amphibious weeds,
Such as from earth's embrace the salt ooze breeds,
Is this; an uninhabited sea-side,
Which the lone fisher, when his nets are dried,
Abandons; and no other object breaks

The waste, but one dwarf tree and some few stakes 10
Broken and unrepaired, and the tide makes
A narrow space of level sand thereon,
Where 'twas our wont to ride while day went down.
This ride was my delight. I love all waste
And solitary places; where we taste 15
The pleasure of believing what we see
Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be:
And such was this wide ocean, and this shore
More barren than its billows; and yet more
Than all, with a remembered friend I love 20
To ride as then I rode;—for the winds drove
The living spray along the sunny air
Into our faces; the blue heavens were bare,
Stripped to their depths by the awakening north;
And, from the waves, sound like delight broke forth 25
Harmonizing with solitude, and sent
Into our hearts ærial merriment.
So, as we rode, we talked; and the swift thought,
Winging itself with laughter, lingered not,
But flew from brain to brain,—such glee was ours, 30
Charged with light memories of remembered hours,
None slow enough for sadness: till we came
Homeward, which always makes the spirit tame.
This day had been cheerful but cold, and now
The sun was sinking, and the wind also. 35
Our talk grew somewhat serious, as may be
Talk interrupted with such raillery
As mocks itself, because it cannot scorn
The thoughts it would extinguish:—'twas forlorn,
Yet pleasing, such as once, so poets tell, 40
The devils held within the dales of Hell
Concerning God, freewill and destiny:
Of all that earth has been or yet may be,
All that vain men imagine or believe,
Or hope can paint or suffering may achieve, 45
We descanted, and I (for ever still
Is it not wise to make the best of ill?)
Argued against despondency, but pride
Made my companion take the darker side.

How from their many isles in evening's gleam 90
 Its temples and its palaces did seem
 Like fabrics of enchantment piled to Heaven.
 I was about to speak, when—"We are even
 "Now at the point I meant," said Maddalo,
 And bade the gondolieri cease to row. 95
 "Look Julian on the west, and listen well
 "If you hear not a deep and heavy bell."
 I looked, and saw between us and the sun
 A building on an island; such a one
 As age to age might add, for uses vile, 100
 A windowless, deformed and dreary pile;
 And on the top an open tower, where hung
 A bell, which in the radiance swayed and swung;
 We could just hear its hoarse and iron tongue:
 The broad sun sunk behind it, and it tolled 105
 In strong and black relief.—"What we behold
 "Shall be the madhouse and its belfry tower,"
 Said Maddalo, "and ever at this hour
 "Those who may cross the water, hear that bell
 "Which calls the maniacs each one from his cell 110
 "To vespers."—"As much skill as need to pray
 "In thanks or hope for their dark lot have they
 "To their stern maker," I replied. "O ho!
 "You talk as in years past," said Maddalo.
 "'Tis strange men change not. You were ever still 115
 "Among Christ's flock a perilous infidel,
 "A wolf for the meek lambs—if you can't swim
 "Beware of Providence." I looked on him,
 But the gay smile had faded in his eye,
 "And such,"—he cried, "is our mortality, 120
 "And this must be the emblem and the sign
 "Of what should be eternal and divine!—
 "And like that black and dreary bell, the soul
 "Hung in a heaven-illuminated tower, must toll
 "Our thoughts and our desires to meet below 125
 "Round the rent heart and pray—as madmen do
 "For what? they know not, till the night of death
 "As sunset that strange vision, severeth
 "Our memory from itself, and us from all

"We sought and yet were baffled." I recall 130
 The sense of what he said, altho' I mar
 The force of his expressions. The broad star
 Of day meanwhile had sunk behind the hill,
 And the black bell became invisible,
 And the red tower looked grey, and all between 135
 The churches, ships and palaces were seen
 Huddled in gloom;—into the purple sea
 The orange hues of heaven sunk silently.
 We hardly spoke, and soon the gondola
 Conveyed me to my lodgings by the way. 140
 The following morn was rainy, cold and dim,
 Ere Maddalo arose, I called on him,
 And whilst I waited with his child I played;
 A lovelier toy sweet Nature never made,
 A serious, subtle, wild, yet gentle being, 145
 Graceful without design and unforeseeing,
 With eyes—Oh speak not of her eyes!—which seem
 Twin mirrors of Italian Heaven, yet gleam
 With such deep meaning, as we never see
 But in the human countenance: with me 150
 She was a special favourite, I had nursed
 Her fine and feeble limbs when she came first
 To this bleak world; and she yet seemed to know
 On second sight her antient playfellow,
 Less changed than she was by six months or so; 155
 For after her first shyness was worn out
 We sate there, rolling billiard balls about,
 When the Count entered—salutations past;
 "The words you spoke last night might well have cast
 "A darkness on my spirit—if man be 160
 "The passive thing you say, I should not see
 "Much harm in the religions and old saws
 "(Tho' I may never own such leaden laws)
 "Which break a teachless nature to the yoke:
 "Mine is another faith"—thus much I spoke 165
 And noting he replied not, added: "See
 "This lovely child, blithe, innocent and free,
 "She spends a happy time with little care
 "While we to such sick thoughts subjected are

"As came on you last night—it is our will 170
 "That thus enchains us to permitted ill—
 "We might be otherwise—we might be all
 "We dream of happy, high, majestic.
 "Where is the love, beauty and truth we seek
 "But in our mind? and if we were not weak 175
 "Should we be less in deed than in desire?"
 "Aye, if we were not weak—and we aspire
 "How vainly to be strong!" said Maddalo:
 "You talk Utopia." "It remains to know,"
 I then rejoined, "and those who try may find 180
 "How strong the chains are which our spirit bind;
 "Brittle perchance as straw . . . We are assured
 "Much may be conquered, much may be endured
 "Of what degrades and crushes us. We know
 "That we have power over ourselves to do 185
 "And suffer—what, we know not till we try;
 "But something nobler than to live and die—
 "So taught those kings of old philosophy
 "Who reigned, before Religion made men blind;
 "And those who suffer with their suffering kind 190
 "Yet feel their faith, religion." "My dear friend,"
 Said Maddalo, "my judgment will not bend
 "To your opinion, tho' I think you might
 "Make such a system refutation-tight
 "As far as words go. I knew one like you 195
 "Who to this city came some months ago,
 "With whom I argued in this sort, and he
 "Is now gone mad,—and so he answered me,—
 "Poor fellow! but if you would like to go
 "We'll visit him, and his wild talk will shew 200
 "How vain are such aspiring theories."
 "I hope to prove the induction otherwise,
 "And that a want of that true theory, still,
 "Which seeks a 'soul of goodness' in things ill,
 "Or in himself or others, has thus bowed 205
 "His being—there are some by nature proud,
 "Who patient in all else demand but this:
 "To love and be beloved with gentleness;
 "And being scorned, what wonder if they die

"Some living death? this is not destiny 210
 "But man's own wilful ill."

As thus I spoke
 Servants announced the gondola, and we
 Through the fast-falling rain and high-wrought sea
 Sailed to the island where the madhouse stands.
 We disembarked. The clap of tortured hands, 215
 Fierce yells and howlings and lamentings keen,
 And laughter where complaint had merrier been,
 Moans, shrieks, and curses, and blaspheming prayers
 Accosted us. We climbed the oozy stairs
 Into an old court yard. I heard on high, 220
 Then, fragments of most touching melody,
 But looking up saw not the singer there—
 Through the black bars in the tempestuous air
 I saw, like weeds on a wrecked palace growing,
 Long tangled locks flung wildly forth, and flowing, 225
 Of those who on a sudden were beguiled
 Into strange silence, and looked forth and smiled
 Hearing sweet sounds.—Then I: "Methinks there were
 "A cure of these with patience and kind care,
 "If music can thus move . . . but what is he 230
 "Whom we seek here?" "Of his sad history
 "I know but this," said Maddalo, "he came
 "To Venice a dejected man, and fame
 "Said he was wealthy, or he had been so;
 "Some thought the loss of fortune wrought him woe;
 "But he was ever talking in such sort 236
 "As you do—far more sadly—he seemed hurt,
 "Even as a man with his peculiar wrong,
 "To hear but of the oppression of the strong,
 "Or those absurd deceits (I think with you 240
 "In some respects you know) which carry through
 "The excellent impostors of this earth
 "When they outface detection—he had worth,
 "Poor fellow! but a humourist in his way"—
 "Alas, what drove him mad?" "I cannot say; 245
 "A lady came with him from France, and when
 "She left him and returned, he wandered then
 "About yon lonely isles of desert sand

"Till he grew wild—he had no cash or land
"Remaining,—the police had brought him here— 250
"Some fancy took him and he would not bear
"Removal; so I fitted up for him
"Those rooms beside the sea, to please his whim,
"And sent him busts and books and urns for flowers
"Which had adorned his life in happier hours, 255
"And instruments of music—you may guess
"A stranger could do little more or less
"For one so gentle and unfortunate,
"And those are his sweet strains which charm the weight
"From madmen's chains, and make this Hell appear
"A heaven of sacred silence, hushed to hear."— 261
"Nay, this was kind of you—he had no claim,
"As the world says"—"None—but the very same
"Which I on all mankind were I as he
"Fallen to such deep reverse;—his melody 265
"Is interrupted—now we hear the din
"Of madmen, shriek on shriek again begin;
"Let us now visit him; after this strain
"He ever communes with himself again,
"And sees nor hears not any." Having said 270
These words we called the keeper, and he led
To an apartment opening on the sea—
There the poor wretch was sitting mournfully
Near a piano, his pale fingers twined
One with the other, and the ooze and wind 275
Rushed through an open casement, and did sway
His hair, and starred it with the brackish spray;
His head was leaning on a music book,
And he was muttering, and his lean limbs shook;
His lips were pressed against a folded leaf 280
In hue too beautiful for health, and grief
Smiled in their motions as they lay apart—
As one who wrought from his own fervid heart
The eloquence of passion, soon he raised
His sad meek face and eyes lustrous and glazed 285
And spoke—sometimes as one who wrote and thought
His words might move some heart that heeded not
If sent to distant lands: and then as one

Reproaching deeds never to be undone
 With wondering self-compassion; then his speech 293
 Was lost in grief, and then his words came each
 Unmodulated, cold, expressionless;
 But that from one jarred accent you might guess
 It was despair made them so uniform:
 And all the while the loud and gusty storm 295
 Hissed thro' the window, and we stood behind
 Stealing his accents from the envious wind
 Unseen. I yet remember what he said
 Distinctly: such impression his words made.

'Month after month,' he cried, 'to bear this load 300
 And as a jade urged by the whip and goad
 To drag life on, which like a heavy chain
 Lengthens behind with many a link of pain!—
 And not to speak my grief—O not to dare
 To give a human voice to my despair, 305
 But live and move, and wretched thing! smile on
 As if I never went aside to groan,
 And wear this mask of falsehood even to those
 Who are most dear—not for my own repose—
 Alas no scorn or pain or hate could be 310
 So heavy as that falsehood is to me—
 But that I cannot bear more altered faces
 Than needs must be, more changed and cold embraces,
 More misery, disappointment and mistrust
 To own me for their father... Would the dust 315
 Were covered in upon my body now!
 That the life ceased to toil within my brow!
 And then these thoughts would at the least be fled;
 Let us not fear such pain can vex the dead.

'What Power delights to torture us? I know 320
 That to myself I do not wholly owe
 What now I suffer, tho' in part I may.
 Alas none strewed sweet flowers upon the way
 Where wandering heedlessly, I met pale Pain
 My shadow, which will leave me not again— 325
 If I have erred, there was no joy in error,

But pain and insult and unrest and terror;
 I have not as some do, bought penitence
 With pleasure, and a dark yet sweet offence,
 For then,—if love and tenderness and truth 330
 Had overlived hope's momentary youth,
 My creed should have redeemed me from repenting,
 But loathed scorn and outrage unrelenting,
 Met love excited by far other seeming
 Until the end was gained . . . as one from dreaming 335
 Of sweetest peace, I woke, and found my state
 Such as it is.—

‘O Thou, my spirit's mate
 Who, for thou art compassionate and wise,
 Wouldst pity me from thy most gentle eyes
 If this sad writing thou shouldst ever see— 340
 My secret groans must be unheard by thee,
 Thou wouldst weep tears bitter as blood to know
 Thy lost friend's incommunicable woe.

‘Ye few by whom my nature has been weighed
 In friendship, let me not that name degrade 345
 By placing on your hearts the secret load
 Which crushes mine to dust. There is one road
 To peace and that is truth, which follow ye!
 Love sometimes leads astray to misery.
 Yet think not tho' subdued—and I may well 350
 Say that I am subdued—that the full Hell
 Within me would infect the untainted breast
 Of sacred nature with its own unrest;
 As some perverted beings think to find
 In scorn or hate a medicine for the mind 355
 Which scorn or hate have wounded—O how vain!
 The dagger heals not but may rend again . . .
 Believe that I am ever still the same
 In creed as in resolve, and what may tame
 My heart, must leave the understanding free, 360
 Or all would sink in this keen agony—
 Nor dream that I will join the vulgar cry,
 Or with my silence sanction tyranny,
 Or seek a moment's shelter from my pain

In any madness which the world calls gain, 365
 Ambition or revenge or thoughts as stern
 As those which make me what I am, or turn
 To avarice or misanthropy or lust . . .
 Heap on me soon O grave, thy welcome dust !
 Till then the dungeon may demand its prey, 370
 And Poverty and Shame may meet and say—
 Halting beside me on the public way—
 That love-devoted youth is our's—let's sit
 Beside him—he may live some six months yet.
 Or the red scaffold, as our country bends, 375
 May ask some willing victim, or ye friends
 May fall under some sorrow which this heart
 Or hand may share or vanquish or avert ;
 I am prepared : in truth with no proud joy
 To do or suffer aught, as when a boy 380
 I did devote to justice and to love
 My nature, worthless now ! . . .

' I must remove
 A veil from my pent mind. 'Tis torn aside !
 O, pallid as Death's dedicated bride,
 Thou mockery which art sitting by my side, 385
 Am I not wan like thee ? at the grave's call
 I haste, invited to thy wedding-ball
 To greet the ghastly paramour, for whom
 Thou hast deserted me . . . and made the tomb
 Thy bridal bed . . . but I beside your feet 390
 Will lie and watch ye from my winding sheet—
 Thus . . . wide awake tho' dead . . . yet stay O stay !
 Go not so soon—I know not what I say—
 Hear but my reasons . . I am mad, I fear,
 My fancy is o'erwrought . . thou art not here . . . 395
 Pale art thou, 'tis most true . . but thou art gone,
 Thy work is finished . . I am left alone !—
 * * * * *

' Nay, was it I who wooed thee to this breast
 Which, like a serpent thou envenomest
 As in repayment of the warmth it lent ? 400
 Didst thou not seek me for thine own content ?
 Did not thy love awaken mine ? I thought

That thou wert she who said "You kiss me not
 Ever, I fear you do not love me now"—
 In truth I loved even to my overthrow 405
 Her, who would fain forget these words: but they
 Cling to her mind, and cannot pass away.

* * * * *

'You say that I am proud—that when I speak
 My lip is tortured with the wrongs which break
 The spirit it expresses . . . Never one 410
 Humbled himself before, as I have done!
 Even the instinctive worm on which we tread
 Turns, tho' it wound not—then with prostrate head
 Sinks in the dust and writhes like me—and dies?
 No: wears a living death of agonies! 415
 As the slow shadows of the pointed grass
 Mark the eternal periods, his pangs pass
 Slow, ever-moving,—making moments be
 As mine seem—each an immortality!

* * * * *

'That you had never seen me—never heard 420
 My voice, and more than all had ne'er endured
 The deep pollution of my loathed embrace—
 That your eyes ne'er had lied love in my face—
 That, like some maniac monk, I had torn out
 The nerves of manhood by their bleeding root 425
 With mine own quivering fingers, so that ne'er
 Our hearts had for a moment mingled there
 To disunite in horror—these were not
 With thee, like some suppressed and hideous thought
 Which flits athwart our musings, but can find 430
 No rest within a pure and gentle mind . . .
 Thou sealedst them with many a bare broad word
 And searedst my memory o'er them,—for I heard
 And can forget not . . . they were ministered
 One after one, those curses. Mix them up 435
 Like self-destroying poisons in one cup,
 And they will make one blessing which thou ne'er
 Didst imprecate for, on me,—death.

* * * * *

'It were

A cruel punishment for one most cruel
 If such can love, to make that love the fuel 440
 Of the mind's hell; hate, scorn, remorse, despair:
 But *me*—whose heart a stranger's tear might wear
 As water-drops the sandy fountain-stone,
 Who loved and pitied all things, and could moan.
 For woes which others hear not, and could see 445
 The absent with the glance of phantasy,
 And with the poor and trampled sit and weep,
 Following the captive to his dungeon deep;
Me—who am as a nerve o'er which do creep
 The else unfelt oppressions of this earth, 450
 And was to thee the flame upon thy hearth,
 When all beside was cold—that thou on me
 Shouldst rain these plagues of blistering agony—
 Such curses are from lips once eloquent
 With love's too partial praise—let none relent 455
 Who intend deeds too dreadful for a name
 Henceforth, if an example for the same
 They seek . . . for thou on me lookedst so, and so—
 And didst speak thus . . . and thus . . . I live to shew
 How much men bear and die not!

* * * * *

'Thou wilt tell, 460

With the grimace of hate how horrible
 It was to meet my love when thine grew less;
 Thou wilt admire how I could e'er address
 Such features to love's work . . . this taunt, tho' true,
 (For indeed nature nor in form nor hue 465
 Bestowed on me her choicest workmanship)
 Shall not be thy defence . . . for since thy lip
 Met mine first, years long past, since thine eye kindled
 With soft fire under mine, I have not dwindled
 Nor changed in mind or body, or in aught 470
 But as love changes what it loveth not
 After long years and many trials.

'How vain

Are words! I thought never to speak again,
 Not even in secret,—not to my own heart—

But from my lips the unwilling accents start, 475
 And from my pen the words flow as I write,
 Dazzling my eyes with scalding tears... my sight
 Is dim to see that charactered in vain
 On this unfeeling leaf which burns the brain
 And eats into it... blotting all things fair 480
 And wise and good which time had written there.

'Those who inflict must suffer, for they see
 The work of their own hearts and this must be
 Our chastisement or recompense—O child!
 I would that thine were like to be more mild 485
 For both our wretched sakes... for thine the most
 Who feelest already all that thou hast lost
 Without the power to wish it thine again;
 And as slow years pass, a funereal train
 Each with the ghost of some lost hope or friend 490
 Following it like its shadow, wilt thou bend
 No thought on my dead memory?

* * * * *

'Alas, love!

Fear me not... against thee I would not move
 A finger in despite. Do I not live
 That thou mayst have less bitter cause to grieve? 495
 I give thee tears for scorn and love for hate;
 And that thy lot may be less desolate
 Than his on whom thou tramplest, I refrain
 From that sweet sleep which medicines all pain.
 Then, when thou speakest of me, never say 500
 He could forgive not. Here I cast away
 All human passions, all revenge, all pride;
 I think, speak, act no ill; I do but hide
 Under these words like embers, every spark
 Of that which has consumed me—quick and dark 505
 The grave is yawning... as its roof shall cover
 My limbs with dust and worms under and over
 So let Oblivion hide this grief... the air
 Closes upon my accents, as despair
 Upon my heart—let death upon despair! 510

He ceased, and overcome leant back awhile,
 Then rising, with a melancholy smile
 Went to a sofa, and lay down, and slept
 A heavy sleep, and in his dreams he wept
 And muttered some familiar name, and we
 Wept without shame in his society. 515
 I think I never was impressed so much;
 The man who were not, must have lacked a touch
 Of human nature . . . then we lingered not,
 Although our argument was quite forgot, 520
 But calling the attendants, went to dine
 At Maddalo's; yet neither cheer nor wine
 Could give us spirits, for we talked of him
 And nothing else, till daylight made stars dim;
 And we agreed his was some dreadful ill 525
 Wrought on him boldly, yet unspeakable,
 By a dear friend; some deadly change in love
 Of one vowed deeply which he dreamed not of;
 For whose sake he, it seemed, had fixed a blot
 Of falsehood on his mind which flourished not 530
 But in the light of all-beholding truth,
 And having stamped this canker on his youth
 She had abandoned him—and how much more
 Might be his woe, we guessed not—he had store
 Of friends and fortune once, as we could guess 535
 From his nice habits and his gentleness;
 These were now lost . . . it were a grief indeed
 If he had changed one unsustaining reed
 For all that such a man might else adorn.
 The colours of his mind seemed yet unworn; 540
 For the wild language of his grief was high,
 Such as in measure were called poetry,
 And I remember one remark which then
 Maddalo made. He said: "Most wretched men
 Are cradled into poetry by wrong, 545
 They learn in suffering what they teach in song."

If I had been an unconnected man
 I, from this moment, should have formed some plan
 Never to leave sweet Venice,—for to me

It was delight to ride by the lone sea; 550
And then, the town is silent—one may write
Or read in gondolas by day or night,
Having the little brazen lamp alight,
Unseen, uninterrupted; books are there,
Pictures, and casts from all those statues fair 555
Which were twin-born with poetry, and all
We seek in towns, with little to recall
Regrets for the green country. I might sit
In Maddalo's great palace, and his wit
And subtle talk would cheer the winter night 560
And make me know myself, and the firelight
Would flash upon our faces, till the day
Might dawn and make me wonder at my stay:
But I had friends in London too: the chief
Attraction here, was that I sought relief 565
From the deep tenderness that maniac wrought
Within me—'twas perhaps an idle thought—
But I imagined that if day by day
I watched him, and but seldom went away,
And studied all the beatings of his heart 570
With zeal, as men study some stubborn art
For their own good, and could by patience find
An entrance to the caverns of his mind,
I might reclaim him from this dark estate:
In friendships I had been most fortunate— 575
Yet never saw I one whom I would call
More willingly my friend; and this was all
Accomplished not; such dreams of baseless good
Oft come and go in crowds and solitude
And leave no trace—but what I now designed 580
Made for long years impression on my mind.
The following morning urged by my affairs
I left bright Venice.

After many years
And many changes I returned; the name
Of Venice, and it's aspect was the same; 585
But Maddalo was travelling far away
Among the mountains of Armenia.
His dog was dead. His child had now become

A woman; such as it has been my doom
 To meet with few, a wonder of this earth 590
 Where there is little of transcendant worth,
 Like one of Shakespeare's women: kindly she,
 And with a manner beyond courtesy,
 Received her father's friend; and when I asked
 Of the lorn maniac, she her memory tasked 595
 And told as she had heard the mournful tale.
 "That the poor sufferer's health began to fail
 "Two years from my departure, but that then
 "The lady who had left him, came again.
 "Her mien had been imperious, but she now 600
 "Looked meek—perhaps remorse had brought her low.
 "Her coming made him better, and they stayed
 "Together at my father's—for I played
 "As I remember with the lady's shawl—
 "I might be six years old—but after all 605
 "She left him" . . . "Why, her heart must have been tough:
 "How did it end?" "And was not this enough?
 "They met—they parted"—"Child, is there no more?"
 "Something within that interval which bore
 "The stamp of *why* they parted, *how* they met: 610
 "Yet if thine aged eyes disdain to wet
 "Those wrinkled cheeks with youth's remembered tears,
 "Ask me no more, but let the silent years
 "Be closed and cered over their memory
 "As yon mute marble where their corpses lie." 615
 I urged and questioned still, she told me how
 All happened—but the cold world shall not know.

CANCELLED PASSAGES OF JULIAN AND MADDALO.

"What think you the dead are?" "Why, dust and clay,
 What should they be?" "'Tis the last hour of day.
 Look on the west, how beautiful it is
 Vaulted with radiant vapours! The deep bliss
 Of that unutterable light has made
 The edges of that cloud fade

Into a hue, like some harmonious thought,
Wasting itself on that which it had wrought,
Till it dies and between
The light hues of the tender, pure, serene,
And infinite tranquility of heaven.
Aye, beautiful! but when not...."

‘Perhaps the only comfort which remains
Is the unheeded clanking of my chains,
The which I make, and call it melody.’

PRINCE ATHANASE.

A FRAGMENT.

PART I.

THERE was a youth, who, as with toil and travel,
 Had grown quite weak and grey before his time;
 Nor any could the restless griefs unravel
 Which burned within him, withering up his prime
 And goading him, like fiends, from land to land. 5
 Not his the load of any secret crime,
 For nought of ill his heart could understand,
 But pity and wild sorrow for the same;—
 Not his the thirst for glory or command
 Baffled with blast of hope-consuming shame; 10
 Nor evil joys which fire the vulgar breast
 And quench in speedy smoke its feeble flame,
 Had left within his soul their dark unrest:
 Nor what religion fables of the grave
 Feared he,—Philosophy's accepted guest. 15
 For none than he a purer heart could have,
 Or that loved good more for itself alone;
 Of nought in heaven or earth was he the slave.

What sorrow strange, and shadowy, and unknown,
Sent him, a hopeless wanderer, through mankind?— 20
If with a human sadness he did groan,

He had a gentle yet aspiring mind;
Just, innocent, with varied learning fed,
And such a glorious consolation find

In others' joy, when all their own is dead: 25
He loved, and laboured for his kind in grief,
And yet, unlike all others, it is said,

That from such toil he never found relief;
Although a child of fortune and of power,
Of an ancestral name the orphan chief. 30

His soul had wedded wisdom, and her dower
Is love and justice, clothed in which he sate
Apart from men, as in a lonely tower,

Pitying the tumult of their dark estate—
Yet even in youth did he not e'er abuse 35
The strength of wealth or thought, to consecrate

Those false opinions which the harsh rich use
To blind the world they famish for their pride;
Nor did he hold from any man his dues,

But like a steward in honest dealings tried 40
With those who toiled and wept, the poor and wise,
His riches and his cares he did divide.

Fearless he was, and scorning all disguise,
What he dared do or think, though men might start,
He spoke with mild yet unaverted eyes; 45

Liberal he was of soul, and frank of heart,
And to his many friends—all loved him well—
Whate'er he knew or felt he would impart,

If words he found those inmost thoughts to tell;
If not, he smiled or wept; and his weak foes 50
He neither spurned nor hated, though with fell

And mortal hate their thousand voices rose,
They past like aimless arrows from his ear—
Nor did his heart or mind its portal close

To those, or them, or any whom life's sphere 55
May comprehend within its wide array.
What sadness made that vernal spirit sere?
He knew not. Though his life, day after day,
Was failing like an un replenished stream,
Though in his eyes a cloud and burthen lay, 60
Through which his soul, like Vesper's serene beam
Piercing the chasms of ever rising clouds,
Shone, softly burning; though his lips did seem
Like reeds which quiver in impetuous floods;
And through his sleep, and o'er each waking hour, 65
Thoughts after thoughts, unresting multitudes,
Were driven within him, by some secret power,
Which bade them blaze, and live, and roll afar,
Like lights and sounds, from haunted tower to tower
O'er castled mountains borne, when tempest's war 70
Is levied by the night-contending winds,
And the pale dalesmen watch with eager ear;—
Though such were in his spirit, as the fiends
Which wake and feed on everliving woe,—
What was this grief, which ne'er in other minds 75
A mirror found,—he knew not—none could know;
But on whoe'er might question him he turned
The light of his frank eyes, as if to show,
He knew not of the grief within that burned,
But asked forbearance with a mournful look; 80
Or spoke in words from which none ever learned
The cause of his disquietude; or shook
With spasms of silent passion; or turned pale:
So that his friends soon rarely undertook
To stir his secret pain without avail;— 85
For all who knew and loved him then perceived
That there was drawn an adamantine veil
Between his heart and mind,—both unrelieved
Wrought in his brain and bosom separate strife.
Some said that he was mad, others believed 90

That memories of an antenatal life
 Made this, where now he dwelt, a penal hell;
 And others said that such mysterious grief
 From God's displeasure, like a darkness, fell
 On souls like his which owned no higher law 95
 Than love; love calm, steadfast, invincible

By mortal fear or supernatural awe;
 And others,—"'Tis the shadow of a dream
 Which the veiled eye of memory never saw 99

"But through the soul's abyss, like some dark stream
 Through shattered mines and caverns underground
 Rolls, shaking its foundations; and no beam

"Of joy may rise, but it is quenched and drowned
 In the dim whirlpools of this dream obscure,
 Soon its exhausted waters will have found 103

"A lair of rest beneath thy spirit pure,
 O Athanase!—in one so good and great,
 Evil or tumult cannot long endure."

So spake they: idly of another's state
 Babbling vain words and fond philosophy; 110
 This was their consolation; such debate

Men held with one another; nor did he
 Like one who labours with a human woe
 Decline this talk: as if its theme might be

Another, not himself, he to and fro 115
 Questioned and canvassed it with subtlest wit,
 And none but those who loved him best could know

That which he knew not, how it galled and bit
 His weary mind, this converse vain and cold;
 For like an eyeless night-mare grief did sit 120

Upon his being; a snake which fold by fold
 Pressed out the life of life, a clinging fiend
 Which clenched him if he stirred with deadlier hold;—
 And so his grief remained—let it remain—untold.¹

DECEMBER, 1817.

¹ The Author was pursuing a fuller development of the ideal character of Athanase, when it struck him that in an attempt at extreme refinement and

PART II.

FRAGMENT I.

PRINCE Athanase had one belovèd friend,
An old, old man, with hair of silver white,
And lips where heavenly smiles would hang and blend
With his wise words; and eyes whose arrowy light
Shone like the reflex of a thousand minds. 5
He was the last whom superstition's blight
Had spared in Greece—the blight that cramps and blinds,—
And in his olive bower at Cœnoë
Had sate from earliest youth. Like one who finds
A fertile island in the barren sea, 10
One mariner who has survived his mates
Many a drear month in a great ship—so he
With soul-sustaining songs,—and sweet debates
Of ancient lore, there fed his lonely being:—
“The mind becomes that which it contemplates,”— 15
And thus Zonoras, by forever seeing
Their bright creations, grew like wisest men;
And when he heard the crash of nations fleeing
A bloodier power than ruled thy ruins then,
O sacred Hellas! many weary years 20
He wandered, till the path of Laian's glen
Was grass-grown—and the unremembered tears
Were dry in Laian for their honoured chief,
Who fell in Byzant, pierced by Moslem spears:—
And as the lady looked with faithful grief 25
From her high lattice o'er the rugged path,
Where she once saw that horseman toil, with brief
And blighting hope, who with the news of death
Struck body and soul as with a mortal blight,
She saw beneath the chesnuts, far beneath, 30

analysis, his conceptions might be betrayed into the assuming a morbid character. The reader will judge whether he is a loser or gainer by this difference.

An old man toiling up, a weary wight;
And soon within her hospitable hall
She saw his white hairs glittering in the light
Of the wood fire, and round his shoulders fall;
And his wan visage and his withered mien
Yet calm and gentle and majestic.

35

And Athanase, her child, who must have been
Then three years old, sate opposite and gazed
In patient silence.

FRAGMENT II.

SUCH was Zonoras; and as daylight finds
One amaranth glittering on the path of frost,
When autumn nights have nipt all weaker kinds,
Thus through his age, dark, cold, and tempest-tost.
Shone truth upon Zonoras; and he filled
From fountains pure, nigh overgrown and lost,

5

The spirit of Prince Athanase, a child,
With soul-sustaining songs of ancient lore
And philosophic wisdom, clear and mild.

And sweet and subtle talk they evermore,
The pupil and the master shared; until,
Sharing that undiminishable store,

10

The youth, as shadows on a grassy hill
Outrun the winds that chase them, soon outran
His teacher, and did teach with native skill

15

Strange truths and new to that experienced man;
Still they were friends, as few have ever been
Who mark the extremes of life's discordant span.

So in the caverns of the forest green,
Or by the rocks of echoing ocean hoar,
Zonoras and Prince Athanase were seen

20

By summer woodmen; and when winter's roar
Sounded o'er earth and sea its blast of war,
The Balearic fisher, driven from shore,

Hanging upon the peaked wave afar, 25
Then saw their lamp from Laian's turret gleam,
Piercing the stormy darkness like a star,

Which pours beyond the sea one steadfast beam,
Whilst all the constellations of the sky
Seemed reeling through the storm. They did but seem—

For, lo! the wintry clouds are all gone by, 31
And bright Arcturus through yon pines is glowing,
And far o'er southern waves, immovably

Belted Orion hangs—warm light is flowing
From the young moon into the sunset's chasm.— 35
“O, summer eve! with power divine, bestowing

“On thine own bird the sweet enthusiasm
Which overflows in notes of liquid gladness,
Filling the sky like light! How many a spasm

“Of fevered brains, oppressed with grief and madness,
Were lulled by thee, delightful nightingale! 41
And these soft waves, murmuring a gentle sadness,

“And the far sighings of yon piny dale
Made vocal by some wind, we feel not here,—
I bear alone what nothing may avail 45

“To lighten—a strange load!”—No human ear
Heard this lament; but o'er the visage wan
Of Athanase, a ruffling atmosphere

Of dark emotion, a swift shadow ran,
Like wind upon some forest-bosomed lake, 50
Glassy and dark.—And that divine old man

Beheld his mystic friend's whole being shake,
Even where its inmost depths were gloomiest—
And with a calm and measured voice he spake,

And with a soft and equal pressure, prest 55
That cold lean hand:—“Dost thou remember yet
When the curved moon then lingering in the west

“Paused in yon waves her mighty horns to wet,
How in those beams we walked, half resting on the sea?
'Tis just one year—sure thou dost not forget— 60

"Then Plato's words of light in thee and me
 Lingered like moonlight in the moonless east,
 For we had just then read—thy memory

"Is faithful now—the story of the feast; 65
 And Agathon and Diotima seemed
 From death and dark forgetfulness released.

FRAGMENT III.

'TWAS at the season when the Earth upsprings
 From slumber, as a spherèd angel's child,
 Shadowing its eyes with green and golden wings,
 Stands up before its mother bright and mild,
 Of whose soft voice the air expectant seems— 5
 So stood before the sun, which shone and smiled

To see it rise thus joyous from its dreams,
 The fresh and radiant Earth. The hoary grove
 Waxed green—and flowers burst forth like starry beams;—

The grass in the warm sun did start and move, 10
 And sea-buds burst beneath the waves serene:—
 How many a one, though none be near to love,

Loves then the shade of his own soul, half seen
 In any mirror—or the spring's young minions,
 The wingèd leaves amid the copses green;— 15

How many a spirit then puts on the pinions
 Of fancy, and outstrips the lagging blast,
 And his own steps—and over wide dominions
 Sweeps in his dream-drawn chariot, far and fast,
 More fleet than storms—the wide world shrinks below, 20
 When winter and despondency are past.

'Twas at this season that Prince Athanase
 Past the white Alps—those eagle-baffling mountains
 Slept in their shrouds of snow;—beside the ways

The waterfalls were voiceless—for their fountains 25
 Were changed to mines of sunless crystal now,
 Or by the curdling winds—like brazen wings

Which clanged along the mountain's marble brow,
Warped into adamantine fretwork, hung
And filled with frozen light the chasm below.

30

FRAGMENT IV.

THOU art the wine whose drunkenness is all
We can desire, O Love! and happy souls,
Ere from thy vine the leaves of autumn fall,

Catch thee, and feed from their o'erflowing bowls
Thousands who thirst for thy ambrosial dew;—
Thou art the radiance which where ocean rolls

5

Investest it; and when the heavens are blue
Thou fillest them; and when the earth is fair
The shadow of thy moving wings imbue

Its desarts and its mountains, till they wear
Beauty like some bright robe;—thou ever soarest
Among the towers of men, and as soft air

10

In spring, which moves the unawakened forest,
Clothing with leaves its branches bare and bleak,
Thou floatest among men; and aye implorest

15

That which from thee they should implore:—the weak
Alone kneel to thee, offering up the hearts
The strong have broken—yet where shall any seek

A garment whom thou clothest not?

MARLOW, 1817.

FRAGMENT OF A LATER PART.

HER hair was brown, her spherèd eyes were brown,
And in their dark and liquid moisture swam,
Like the dim orb of the eclipsèd moon;

Yet when the spirit flashed beneath, there came
The light from them, as when tears of delight
Double the western planet's serene flame.

LINES.

I.

THE cold earth slept below,
Above the cold sky shone;
And all around, with a chilling sound,
From caves of ice and fields of snow,
The breath of night like death did flow
Beneath the sinking moon.

II.

The wintry hedge was black,
The green grass was not seen,
The birds did rest on the bare thorn's breast,
Whose roots, beside the pathway track,
Had bound their folds o'er many a crack,
Which the frost had made between.

III.

Thine eyes glowed in the glare
Of the moon's dying light;
As a fenfire's beam on a sluggish stream,
Gleams dimly, so the moon shone there,
And it yellowed the strings of thy raven hair,
That shook in the wind of night.

IV.

The moon made thy lips pale, beloved—
The wind made thy bosom chill—
The night did shed on thy dear head
Its frozen dew, and thou didst lie
Where the bitter breath of the naked sky
Might visit thee at will.

DEATH.

I.

DEATH is here and death is there,
Death is busy everywhere,
All around, within, beneath,
Above is death—and we are death.

II.

Death has set his mark and seal
On all we are and all we feel,
On all we know and all we fear,

* * * *

III.

First our pleasures die—and then
Our hopes, and then our fears—and when
These are dead, the debt is due,
Dust claims dust—and we die too.

IV.

All things that we love and cherish,
Like ourselves must fade and perish,
Such is our rude mortal lot—
Love itself would, did they not.

LINES.

I.

THAT time is dead for ever, child,
Drowned, frozen, dead for ever!

We look on the past
And stare aghast
At the spectres wailing, pale and ghast,
Of hopes which thou and I beguiled
To death on life's dark river.

II.

The stream we gazed on then, rolled by;
Its waves are unreturning;
But we yet stand
In a lone land,
Like tombs to mark the memory
Of hopes and fears, which fade and flee
In the light of life's dim morning.

DEATH.

I.

THEY die—the dead return not—Misery
Sits near an open grave and calls them over,

A Youth with hoary hair and haggard eye—
 They are the names of kindred, friend and lover,
 Which he so feebly calls—they all are gone!
 Fond wretch, all dead, those vacant names alone,
 This most familiar scene, my pain—
 These tombs alone remain.

II.

Misery, my sweetest friend—oh! weep no more!
 Thou wilt not be consoled—I wonder not!
 For I have seen thee from thy dwelling's door
 Watch the calm sunset with them, and this spot
 Was even as bright and calm, but transitory,
 And now thy hopes are gone, thy hair is hoary;
 This most familiar scene, my pain—
 These tombs alone remain.

SONG, ON A FADED VIOLET.

I.

THE odour from the flower is gone
 Which like thy kisses breathed on me;
 The colour from the flower is flown
 Which glowed of thee and only thee!

II.

A shrivelled, lifeless, vacant form,
 It lies on my abandoned breast,
 And mocks the heart which yet is warm,
 With cold and silent rest.

III.

I weep,—my tears revive it not!
 I sigh,—it breathes no more on me;
 Its mute and uncomplaining lot
 Is such as mine should be.

STANZAS.

WRITTEN IN DEJECTION, NEAR NAPLES.

I.

THE sun is warm, the sky is clear,
 The waves are dancing fast and bright,

Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
The purple noon's transparent might,
The breath of the moist earth is light,
Around its unexpanded buds;
Like many a voice of one delight,
The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,
The City's voice itself is soft like Solitude's.

II.

I see the Deep's untrampled floor
With green and purple seaweeds strown;
I see the waves upon the shore,
Like light dissolved in star-showers, thrown:
I sit upon the sands alone,
The lightning of the noon-tide ocean
Is flashing round me, and a tone
Arises from its measured motion,
How sweet! did any heart now share in my emotion.

III.

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,
Nor peace within nor calm around,
Nor that content surpassing wealth
The sage in meditation found,
And walked with inward glory crowned—
Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure.
Others I see whom these surround—
Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;—
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.

IV.

Yet now despair itself is mild,
Even as the winds and waters are;
I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne and yet must bear,
Till death like sleep might steal on me,
And I might feel in the warm air
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

V.

Some might lament that I were cold,
As I, when this sweet day is gone,

Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,
 Insults with this untimely moan;
 They might lament—for I am one
 Whom men love not,—and yet regret,
 Unlike this day, which, when the sun
 Shall on its stainless glory set,
 Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in memory yet.

AUTUMN:

A DIRGE.

I.

THE warm sun is failing, the bleak wind is wailing,
 The bare boughs are sighing, the pale flowers are dying,
 And the year
 On the earth her death-bed, in a shroud of leaves dead,
 Is lying.
 Come, months, come away,
 From November to May,
 In your saddest array;
 Follow the bier
 Of the dead cold year,
 And like dim shadows watch by her sepulchre.

II.

The chill rain is falling, the nipt worm is crawling,
 The rivers are swelling, the thunder is knelling
 For the year;
 The blithe swallows are flown, and the lizards each gone
 To his dwelling;
 Come, months, come away;
 Put on white, black, and grey;
 Let your light sisters play—
 Ye, follow the bier
 Of the dead cold year,
 And make her grave green with tear on tear.

THE MASK OF ANARCHY
WRITTEN ON THE OCCASION OF THE MASSACRE
AT MANCHESTER.

I.

As I lay asleep in Italy
There came a voice from over the Sea,
And with great power it forth led me
To walk in the visions of Poesy.

II.

I met Murder on the way—
He had a mask like Castlereagh—
Very smooth he looked, yet grim;
Seven blood-hounds followed him:

III.

All were fat; and well they might
Be in admirable plight,
For one by one, and two by two,
He tossed them human hearts to chew
Which from his wide cloak he drew.

IV.

Next came Fraud, and he had on,
Like Eldon, an ermined gown;
His big tears, for he wept well,
Turned to mill-stones as they fell.

V.

And the little children, who
Round his feet played to and fro,
Thinking every tear a gem,
Had their brains knocked out by them.

VI.

Clothed with the Bible, as with light,
And the shadows of the night,
Like Sidmouth, next, Hypocrisy
On a crocodile rode by.

VII.

And many more Destructions played
In this ghastly masquerade,
All disguised, even to the eyes,
Like Bishops, lawyers, peers or spies.

VIII.

Last came Anarchy: he rode
On a white horse, splashed with blood;
He was pale even to the lips,
Like Death in the Apocalypse.

IX.

And he wore a kingly crown;
And in his grasp a sceptre shone;
On his brow this mark I saw—
"I AM GOD, AND KING, AND LAW!"

X.

With a pace stately and fast,
Over English land he past,
Trampling to a mire of blood
The adoring multitude.

XI.

And a mighty troop around,
With their trampling shook the ground,
Waving each a bloody sword,
For the service of their Lord.

XII.

And with glorious triumph, they
Rode thro' England proud and gay,
Drunk as with intoxication
Of the wine of desolation.

XIII.

O'er fields and towns, from sea to sea,
Past the Pageant swift and free,
Tearing up, and trampling down;
Till they came to London town.

XIV.

And each dweller, panic-stricken,
Felt his heart with terror sicken
Hearing the tempestuous cry
Of the triumph of Anarchy.

XV.

For with pomp to meet him came,
Clothed in arms like blood and flame,
The hired murderers, who did sing
"Thou art God, and Law, and King.

XVI.

"We have waited, weak and lone
"For thy coming, Mighty One!
"Our purses are empty, our swords are cold.
"Give us glory, and blood, and gold."

XVII.

Lawyers and priests, a motley crowd,
To the earth their pale brows bowed;
Like a bad prayer not over loud,
Whispering—"Thou art Law and God."—

XVIII.

Then all cried with one accord,
"Thou art King, and God, and Lord;
"Anarchy, to thee we bow,
"Be thy name made holy now!"

XIX.

And Anarchy, the Skeleton,
Bowed and grinned to every one,
As well as if his education
Had cost ten millions to the nation.

XX.

For he knew the Palaces
Of our Kings were nightly his;
His the sceptre, crown, and globe,
And the gold-inwoven robe.

XXI.

So he sent his slaves before
To seize upon the Bank and Tower,
And was proceeding with intent
To meet his pensioned Parliament

XXII.

When one fled past, a maniac maid,
And her name was Hope, she said:
But she looked more like Despair,
And she cried out in the air:

XXIII.

"My father Time is weak and grey
"With waiting for a better day;
"See how idiot-like he stands,
"Fumbling with his palsied hands!

XXIV.

"He has had child after child,
"And the dust of death is piled
"Over every one but me—
"Misery, oh, Misery!"

XXV.

Then she lay down in the street,
Right before the horses' feet,
Expecting, with a patient eye,
Murder, Fraud and Anarchy.

XXVI.

When between her and her foes
A mist, a light, an image rose,
Small at first, and weak, and frail
Like the vapour of a vale:

XXVII.

Till as clouds grow on the blast,
Like tower-crowned giants striding fast,
And glare with lightnings as they fly,
And speak in thunder to the sky,

XXVIII.

It grew—a Shape arrayed in mail
Brighter than the viper's scale,
And upborne on wings whose grain
Was as the light of sunny rain.

XXIX.

On its helm, seen far away,
A planet, like the Morning's, lay;
And those plumes its light rained thro'
Like a shower of crimson dew.

XXX.

With step as soft as wind it past
O'er the heads of men—so fast
That they knew the presence there,
And looked,—and all was empty air.

XXXI.

As flowers beneath May's footstep waken,
As stars from Night's loose hair are shaken,
As waves arise when loud winds call,
Thoughts sprung where'er that step did fall.

XXXII.

And the prostrate multitude
Looked—and ankle-deep in blood,
Hope, that maiden most serene,
Was walking with a quiet mien:

XXXIII.

And Anarchy, the ghastly birth,
Lay dead earth upon the earth;
The Horse of Death tameless as wind
Fled, and with his hoofs did grind
To dust, the murderers thronged behind.

XXXIV.

A rushing light of clouds and splendour,
A sense awakening and yet tender
Was heard and felt—and at its close
These words of joy and fear arose

XXXV.

As if their own indignant Earth
Which gave the sons of England birth
Had felt their blood upon her brow,
And shuddering with a mother's throe

XXXVI.

Had turnèd every drop of blood
By which her face had been bedewed
To an accent unwithstood,—
As if her heart had cried aloud:

XXXVII.

"Men of England, heirs of Glory,
Heroes of unwritten story,
Nurslings of one mighty Mother,
Hopes of her, and one another;

XXXVIII.

"Rise like Lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number,
Shake your chains to earth like dew

Which in sleep had fallen on you—
Ye are many—they are few.

XXXIX.

“What is Freedom?—ye can tell
That which slavery is, too well—
For its very name has grown
To an echo of your own.

XL.

“’Tis to work and have such pay
As just keeps life from day to day
In your limbs, as in a cell
For the tyrants’ use to dwell

XLI.

“So that ye for them are made
Loom, and plough, and sword, and spade,
With or without your own will bent
To their defence and nourishment.

XLII.

“’Tis to see your children weak
With their mothers pine and peak,
When the winter winds are bleak,—
They are dying whilst I speak.

XLIII.

“’Tis to hunger for such diet
As the rich man in his riot
Casts to the fat dogs that lie
Surfeiting beneath his eye;

XLIV.

“’Tis to let the Ghost of Gold
Take from Toil a thousandfold
More than e’er its substance could
In the tyrannies of old.

XLV.

“Paper coin—that forgery
Of the title deeds, which ye
Hold to something of the worth
Of the inheritance of Earth.

XLVI.

“’Tis to be a slave in soul
And to hold no strong controul

Over your own wills, but be
All that others make of ye.

XLVII.

"And at length when ye complain
With a murmur weak and vain
'Tis to see the Tyrant's crew
Ride over your wives and you—
Blood is on the grass like dew.

XLVIII.

"Then it is to feel revenge
Fiercely thirsting to exchange
Blood for blood—and wrong for wrong—
Do not thus when ye are strong.

XLIX.

"Birds find rest, in narrow nest
When weary of their wingèd quest;
Beasts find fare, in woody lair
When storm and snow are in the air.

L.

"Asses, swine, have litter spread
And with fitting food are fed;
All things have a home but one—
Thou, Oh, Englishman, hast none!

LI.

"This is Slavery—savage men,
Or wild beasts within a den
Would endure not as ye do—
But such ills they never knew.

LII.

"What art thou Freedom? O! could slaves
Answer from their living graves
This demand—tyrants would flee
Like a dream's dim imagery:

LIII.

"Thou art not, as impostors say,
A shadow soon to pass away,
A superstition, and a name
Echoing from the cave of Fame.

LIV.

"For the labourer thou art bread,
And a comely table spread
From his daily labour come
To a neat and happy home.

LV.

"Thou art clothes, and fire, and food
For the trampled multitude—
No—in countries that are free
Such starvation cannot be
As in England now we see.

LVI.

"To the rich thou art a check,
When his foot is on the neck
Of his victim, thou dost make
That he treads upon a snake.

LVII.

"Thou art Justice—ne'er for gold
May thy righteous laws be sold
As laws are in England—thou
Shield'st alike the high and low.

LVIII.

"Thou art Wisdom—Freemen never
Dream that God will damn for ever
All who think those things untrue
Of which Priests make such ado.

LIX.

"Thou art Peace—never by thee
Would blood and treasure wasted be
As tyrants wasted them, when all
Leagued to quench thy flame in Gaul.

LX.

"What if English toil and blood
Was poured forth, even as a flood?
It availed, Oh, Liberty!
To dim, but not extinguish thee.

LXI.

"Thou art Love—the rich have kist
Thy feet, and like him following Christ
Give their substance to the free
And thro' the rough world follow thee

LXII.

"Or turn their wealth to arms, and make
War for thy belovèd sake
On wealth, and war, and fraud—whence they
Drew the power which is their prey.

LXIII.

"Science, Poetry and Thought
Are thy lamps; they make the lot
Of the dwellers in a cot
So serene, they curse it not.

LXIV.

"Spirit, Patience, Gentleness,
All that can adorn and bless
Art thou—let deeds not words express
Thine exceeding loveliness.

LXV.

"Let a great Assembly be
Of the fearless and the free
On some spot of English ground
Where the plains stretch wide around.

LXVI.

"Let the blue sky overhead,
The green earth on which ye tread,
All that must eternal be
Witness the solemnity.

LXVII.

"From the corners uttermost
Of the bounds of English coast;
From every hut, village and town
Where those who live and suffer moan
For others' misery or their own,

LXVIII.

"From the workhouse and the prison
Where pale as corpses newly risen,
Women, children, young and old
Groan for pain, and weep for cold—

LXIX.

"From the haunts of daily life
Where is waged the daily strife
With common wants and common cares
Which sows the human heart with tares—

LXX.

"Lastly from the palaces
Where the murmur of distress
Echoes, like the distant sound
Of a wind alive around

LXXI.

"Those prison halls of wealth and fashion
Where some few feel such compassion
For those who groan, and toil, and wail
As must make their brethren pale—

LXXII.

"Ye who suffer woes untold,
Or to feel, or to behold
Your lost country bought and sold
With a price of blood and gold—

LXXIII.

"Let a vast assembly be,
And with great solemnity
Declare with measured words that ye
Are, as God has made ye, free—

LXXIV.

"Be your strong and simple words
Keen to wound as sharpened swords,
And wide as targes let them be,
With their shade to cover ye.

LXXV.

"Let the tyrants pour around
With a quick and startling sound,
Like the loosening of a sea,
Troops of armed emblazonry.

LXXVI.

"Let the charged artillery drive
Till the dead air seems alive
With the clash of clanging wheels,
And the tramp of horses' heels.

LXXVII.

"Let the fixed bayonet
Gleam with sharp desire to wet
Its bright point in English blood
Looking keen as one for food.

LXXVIII.

"Let the horsemen's scymitars
Wheel and flash, like sphereless stars
Thirsting to eclipse their burning
In a sea of death and mourning.

LXXIX.

"Stand ye calm and resolute,
Like a forest close and mute,
With folded arms and looks which are
Weapons of an unvanquished war,

LXXX.

"And let Panic, who outspeeds
The career of armed steeds
Pass, a disregarded shade
Thro' your phalanx undismayed.

LXXXI.

"Let the laws of your own land,
Good or ill, between ye stand
Hand to hand, and foot to foot,
Arbiters of the dispute,

LXXXII.

"The old laws of England—they
Whose reverend heads with age are grey,
Children of a wiser day;
And whose solemn voice must be
Thine own echo—Liberty!

LXXXIII.

"On those who first should violate
Such sacred heralds in their state
Rest the blood that must ensue,
And it will not rest on you.

LXXXIV.

"And if then the tyrants dare
Let them ride among you there,
Slash, and stab, and maim, and hew,—
What they like, that let them do.

LXXXV.

"With folded arms and steady eyes,
And little fear, and less surprise
Look upon them as they slay
Till their rage has died away.

LXXXVI.

"Then they will return with shame
To the place from which they came,
And the blood thus shed will speak
In hot blushes on their cheek.

LXXXVII.

"Every woman in the land
Will point at them as they stand—
They will hardly dare to greet
Their acquaintance in the street.

LXXXVIII.

"And the bold, true warriors
Who have hugged Danger in wars
Will turn to those who would be free
Ashamed of such base company.

LXXXIX.

"And that slaughter to the Nation
Shall steam up like inspiration,
Eloquent, oracular;
A volcano heard afar.

XC.

"And these words shall then become
Like oppression's thundered doom
Ringing thro' each heart and brain,
Heard again—again—again—

XCI.

"Rise like Lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number—
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you—
Ye are many—they are few."

REJECTED STANZA OF THE MASK OF ANARCHY

(BETWEEN STANZAS XLIX AND L).

Horses, oxen, have a home,
When from daily toil they come;
Household dogs, when the wind roars,
Find a home within warm doors.

PETER BELL THE THIRD.

BY

MICHING MALLECHO, ESQ.

Is it a party in a parlour,
 Crammed just as they on earth were crammed,
 Some sipping punch—some sipping tea;
 But, as you by their faces see,
 All silent, and all—damned!

Peter Bell, by W. WORDSWORTH

OPHELIA.—What means this, my lord?

HAMLET.—Marry, this is Miching Mallecho; it means mischief.
 SHAKESPEARE.

DEDICATION.

TO THOMAS BROWN, ESQ., THE YOUNGER, H.F.

DEAR TOM,

Allow me to request you to introduce Mr. Peter Bell to the respectable family of the Fudges; although he may fall short of those very considerable personages in the more active properties which characterize the Rat and the Apostate, I suspect that even you, their historian, will confess that he surpasses them in the more peculiarly legitimate qualification of intolerable dulness.

You know Mr. Examiner Hunt; well—it was he who presented me to two of the Mr. Bells. My intimacy with the younger Mr. Bell naturally sprung from this introduction to his brothers. And in presenting him to you, I have the satisfaction of being able to assure you that he is considerably the dullest of the three.

There is this particular advantage in an acquaintance with any one of the Peter Bells, that if you know one Peter Bell, you know three Peter Bells; they are not one, but three; not three, but one. An awful mystery, which, after having caused torrents of blood, and having been hymned by groans enough to deafen the music of the spheres, is at length illustrated to the satisfaction of all parties in the theological world, by the nature of Mr. Peter Bell.

Peter is a polyhedric Peter, or a Peter with many sides. He changes colours like a cameleon, and his coat like a snake. He is a Proteus of a Peter. He was at first sublime, pathetic, impressive, profound; then dull; then prosy and dull; and now dull—O, so very dull! it is an ultra-legitimate dulness.

You will perceive that it is not necessary to consider Hell and the Devil as supernatural machinery. The whole scene of my epic is in "this world which is"—so Peter informed us before his conversion to *White Obi*—

—The world of all of us, and where
We find our happiness, or not at all.

Let me observe that I have spent six or seven days in composing this sublime piece; the orb of my moon-like genius has made the fourth part of its revolution round the dull earth which you inhabit, driving you mad, while it has retained its calmness and its splendour, and I have been fitting this its last phase "to occupy a permanent station in the literature of my country."

Your works, indeed, dear Tom, sell better; but mine are far superior. The public is no judge; posterity sets all to rights.

Allow me to observe that so much has been written of Peter Bell, that the present history can be considered only, like the *Iliad*, as a continuation of that series of cyclic poems, which have already been candidates for bestowing immortality upon, at the same time that they receive it from, his character and adventures. In this point of view I have violated no rule of syntax in beginning my composition with a conjunction; the full stop which closes the

poem continued by me, being like the full stops at the end of the Iliad and Odyssey, a full stop of a very qualified import.

Hoping that the immortality which you have given to the Fudges, you will receive from them; and in the firm expectation, that when London shall be an habitation of bitterns, when St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey shall stand, shapeless and nameless ruins, in the midst of an unpeopled marsh; when the piers of Waterloo-Bridge shall become the nuclei of islets of reeds and osiers, and cast the jagged shadows of their broken arches on the solitary stream, some transatlantic commentator will be weighing in the scales of some new and now unimagined system of criticism, the respective merits of the Bells and the Fudges, and their historians.

I remain, dear Tom,

Yours sincerely

MICHING MALLECHO.

December 1, 1819.

P.S.—Pray excuse the date of place; so soon as the profits of the publication come in, I mean to hire lodgings in a more respectable street.

PROLOGUE

PETER BELLS, one, two and three,
O'er the wide world wandering be.—
First, the antenatal Peter,
Wrapt in weeds of the same metre,
The so long predestined raiment
Clothed in which to walk his way meant
The second Peter; whose ambition
Is to link the proposition,
As the mean of two extremes—
(This was learnt from Aldric's themes)
Shielding from the guilt of schism
The orthodoxal syllogism;
The First Peter—he who was
Like the shadow in the glass

Of the second, yet unripe, 15
 His substantial antitype.—
 Then came Peter Bell the Second,
 Who henceforward must be reckoned
 The body of a double soul,
 And that portion of the whole 20
 Without which the rest would seem
 Ends of a disjointed dream.—
 And the Third is he who has
 O'er the grave been forced to pass
 To the other side, which is,— 25
 Go and try else,—just like this.

Peter Bell the First was Peter
 Smugger, milder, softer, neater,
 Like the soul before it is
 Born from *that* world into *this*. 30
 The next Peter Bell was he,
 Predevote, like you and me,
 To good or evil as may come;
 His was the severer doom,—
 For he was an evil Cotter, 35
 And a polygamic Potter.¹
 And the last is Peter Bell,
 Damned since our first parents fell,
 Damned eternally to Hell—
 Surely he deserves it well! 40

PART THE FIRST.

DEATH.

I.

AND Peter Bell, when he had been
 With fresh-imported Hell-fire warmed,

¹ The oldest scholiasts read—

A *dodecagamic* Potter.

This is at once more descriptive and more megalophonous,—but the alliteration of the text had captivated the vulgar ear of the herd of later commentators.

Grew serious—from his dress and mien
'Twas very plainly to be seen
Peter was quite reformed.

II.

His eyes turned up, his mouth turned down;
His accent caught a nasal twang;
He oiled his hair,¹ there might be heard
The grace of God in every word
Which Peter said or sang.

III.

But Peter now grew old, and had
An ill no doctor could unravel;
His torments almost drove him mad;—
Some said it was a fever bad—
Some swore it was the gravel.

IV.

His holy friends then came about,
And with long preaching and persuasion,
Convinced the patient that, without
The smallest shadow of a doubt,
He was predestined to damnation.

V.

They said—"Thy name is Peter Bell;
Thy skin is of a brimstone hue;
Alive or dead—aye, sick or well—
The one God made to rhyme with hell;
The other, I think, rhymes with you."

VI.

Then Peter set up such a yell!—
The nurse, who with some water gruel
Was climbing up the stairs, as well
As her old legs could climb them—fell,
And broke them both—the fall was cruel.

¹ To those who have not duly appreciated the distinction between *Whale* and *Russia* oil, this attribute might rather seem to belong to the Dandy than the Evangelic. The effect, when to the windward, is indeed so similar, that it requires a subtle naturalist to discriminate the animals. They belong, however, to distinct genera.

VII.

The Parson from the casement leapt
Into the lake of Windermere—
And many an eel—though no adept
In God's right reason for it—kept
Gnawing his kidneys half a year.

VIII.

And all the rest rushed through the door,
And tumbled over one another,
And broke their skulls.—Upon the floor
Meanwhile sat Peter Bell, and swore,
And cursed his father and his mother;

IX.

And raved of God, and sin, and death,
Blaspheming like an infidel;
And said, that with his clenched teeth,
He'd seize the earth from underneath,
And drag it with him down to hell.

X.

As he was speaking came a spasm,
And wrenched his gnashing teeth asunder;
Like one who sees a strange phantasm
He lay,—there was a silent chasm
Between his upper jaw and under.

XI.

And yellow death lay on his face;
And a fixed smile that was not human
Told, as I understand the case,
That he was gone to the wrong place:—
I heard all this from the old woman.

XII.

Then there came down from Langdale Pike
A cloud, with lightning, wind and hail;
It swept over the mountains like
An ocean,—and I heard it strike
The woods and crags of Grasmere vale.

XIII.

And I saw the black storm come
Nearer, minute after minute;

Its thunder made the cataracts dumb;
 With hiss, and clash, and hollow hum,
 It neared as if the Devil was in it.

XIV.

The Devil *was* in it:—he had bought
 Peter for half-a-crown; and when
 The storm which bore him vanished, nought
 That in the house that storm had caught
 Was ever seen again.

XV.

The gaping neighbours came next day—
 They found all vanished from the shore:
 The Bible, whence he used to pray,
 Half scorched under a hen-coop lay;
 Smashed glass—and nothing more!

PART THE SECOND.

THE DEVIL.

I.

THE DEVIL, I safely can aver,
 Has neither hoof, nor tail, nor sting;
 Nor is he, as some sages swear,
 A spirit, neither here nor there,
 In nothing—yet in everything.

II.

He is—what we are; for sometimes
 The Devil is a gentleman;
 At others a bard bartering rhymes
 For sack; a statesman spinning crimes;
 A swindler, living as he can;

III.

A thief, who cometh in the night,
 With whole boots and net pantaloons,
 Like some one whom it were not right
 To mention;—or the luckless wight,
 From whom he steals nine silver spoons.

IV.

But in this case he did appear
Like a slop-merchant from Wapping,
And with smug face, and eye severe,
On every side did perk and peer
Till he saw Peter dead or napping.

V.

He had on an upper Benjamin
(For he was of the driving schism)
In the which he wrapt his skin
From the storm he travelled in,
For fear of rheumatism.

VI.

He called the ghost out of the corse;—
It was exceedingly like Peter,—
Only its voice was hollow and hoarse—
It had a queerish look of course—
Its dress too was a little neater.

VII.

The Devil knew not his name and lot;
Peter knew not that he was Bell:
Each had an upper stream of thought,
Which made all seem as it was not;
Fitting itself to all things well.

VIII.

Peter thought he had parents dear,
Brothers, sisters, cousins, cronies,
In the fens of Lincolnshire;
He perhaps had found them there
Had he gone and boldly shown his

IX.

Solemn phiz in his own village;
Where he thought oft when a boy
He'd clomb the orchard walls to pillage
The produce of his neighbour's tillage,
With marvellous pride and joy.

X.

And the Devil thought he had,
'Mid the misery and confusion

Of an unjust war, just made
 A fortune by the gainful trade
 Of giving soldiers rations bad—
 The world is full of strange delusion.

XI.

That he had a mansion planned
 In a square like Grosvenor-square,
 That he was aping fashion, and
 That he now came to Westmoreland
 To see what was romantic there.

XII.

And all this, though quite ideal,—
 Ready at a breath to vanish,—
 Was a state not more unreal
 Than the peace he could not feel,
 Or the care he could not banish.

XIII.

After a little conversation,
 The Devil told Peter, if he chose,
 He'd bring him to the world of fashion
 By giving him a situation
 In his own service—and new clothes.

XIV.

And Peter bowed, quite pleased and proud,
 And after waiting some few days
 For a new livery—dirty yellow
 Turned up with black—the wretched fellow
 Was bowled to Hell in the Devil's chaise.

PART THE THIRD.

HELL.

I.

HELL is a city much like London—
 A populous and a smoky city;
 There are all sorts of people undone,

And there is little or no fun done;
Small justice shown, and still less pity.

II.

There is a Castles, and a Canning,
A Cobbett, and a Castlereagh;
All sorts of caitiff corpses planning
All sorts of cozening for trepanning
Corpses less corrupt than they.

III.

There is a * * *, who has lost
His wits, or sold them, none knows which;
He walks about a double ghost,
And though as thin as Fraud almost—
Ever grows more grim and rich.

IV.

There is a Chancery Court; a King;
A manufacturing mob; a set
Of thieves who by themselves are sent
Similar thieves to represent;
An army; and a public debt.

V.

Which last is a scheme of paper money,
And means—being interpreted—
“Bees, keep your wax—give us the honey,
And we will plant, while skies are sunny,
Flowers, which in winter serve instead.”

VI.

There is great talk of revolution—
And a great chance of despotism—
German soldiers—camps—confusion—
Tumults—lotteries—rage—delusion—
Gin—suicide—and methodism.

VII.

Taxes too, on wine and bread,
And meat, and beer, and tea, and cheese,
From which those patriots pure are fed,
Who gorge before they reel to bed
The tenfold essence of all these.

VIII.

There are mincing women, mewing,
 (Like cats, who *amant misère*,¹)
 Of their own virtue, and pursuing
 Their gentler sisters to that ruin,
 Without which—what were chastity? ²

IX.

Lawyers—judges—old hobnobbers
 Are there—bailiffs—chancellors—
 Bishops—great and little robbers—
 Rhymesters—pamphleteers—stock-jobbers—
 Men of glory in the wars,—

X.

Things whose trade is, over ladies
 To lean, and flirt, and stare, and simper,
 Till all that is divine in woman
 Grows cruel, courteous, smooth, inhuman,
 Crucified 'twixt a smile and whimper.

XI.†

Thrusting, toiling, wailing, moiling,
 Frowning, preaching—such a riot!
 Each with never-ceasing labour,
 Whilst he thinks he cheats his neighbour,
 Cheating his own heart of quiet.

XII.

And all these meet at levees;—
 Dinners convivial and political;—
 Suppers of epic poets;—teas,
 Where small talk dies in agonies;—
 Breakfasts professional and critical;

¹ One of the attributes in Linnaeus's description of the Cat. To a similar cause the caterwauling of more than one species of this genus is to be referred;—except, indeed, that the poor quadruped is compelled to quarrel with its own pleasures, whilst the biped is supposed only to quarrel with those of others.

² What would this husk and excuse for a virtue be without its kernel prostitution, or the kernel prostitution without this husk of a virtue? I wonder the women of the town do not form an association, like the Society for the Suppression of Vice, for the support of what may be called the "King, Church, and Constitution" of their order. But this subject is almost too horrible for a joke.

XIII.

Lunches and snacks so aldermanic
 That one would furnish forth ten dinners,
 Where reigns a Cretan-tongued panic,
 Lest news Russ, Dutch, or Alemannic
 Should make some losers, and some winners;—

XIV.

At conversazioni—balls—
 Conventicles—and drawing-rooms—
 Courts of law—committees—calls
 Of a morning—clubs—book-stalls—
 Churches—masquerades—and tombs.

XV.

And this is Hell—and in this smother
 All are damnable and damned;
 Each one damning, damns the other;
 They are damned by one another,
 By none other are they damned.

XVI.

'Tis a lie to say, "God damns!"¹
 Where was Heaven's Attorney General
 When they first gave out such flams?
 Let there be an end of shams,
 They are mines of poisonous mineral.

XVII.

Statesmen damn themselves to be
 Cursed; and lawyers damn their souls
 To the auction of a fee;
 Churchmen damn themselves to see
 God's sweet love in burning coals.

XVIII.

The rich are damned, beyond all cure,
 To taunt, and starve, and trample on
 The weak and wretched; and the poor
 Damn their broken hearts to endure
 Stripe on stripe, with groan on groan.

¹ This libel on our national oath, and this accusation of all our countrymen of being in the daily practice of solemnly asseverating the most enormous falsehood, I fear deserves the notice of a more active Attorney General than that here alluded to.

XIX.

Sometimes the poor are damned indeed
 To take,—not means for being blest,—
 But Cobbett's snuff, revenge; that weed
 From which the worms that it doth feed
 Squeeze less than they before possessed.

XX.

And some few, like we know who,
 Damned—but God alone knows why—
 To believe their minds are given
 To make this ugly Hell a Heaven;
 In which faith they live and die.

XXI.

Thus, as in a town, plague-stricken,
 Each man be he sound or no
 Must indifferently sicken;
 As when day begins to thicken,
 None knows a pigeon from a crow,—

XXII.

So good and bad, sane and mad,
 The oppressor and the oppressed;
 Those who weep to see what others
 Smile to inflict upon their brothers;
 Lovers, haters, worst and best;

XXIII.

All are damned—they breathe an air,
 Thick, infected, joy-dispelling:
 Each pursues what seems most fair,
 Mining like moles, through mind, and there
 Scoop palace-caverns vast, where Care
 In thronèd state is ever dwelling.

PART THE FOURTH.

SIN.

I.

Lo, Peter in Hell's Grosvenor-square,
 A footman in the devil's service!

And the misjudging world would swear
That every man in service there
To virtue would prefer vice.

II.

But Peter, though now damned, was not
What Peter was before damnation.
Men oftentimes prepare a lot
Which ere it finds them, is not what
Suits with their genuine station.

III.

All things that Peter saw and felt
Had a peculiar aspect to him;
And when they came within the belt
Of his own nature, seemed to melt,
Like cloud to cloud, into him.

IV.

And so the outward world uniting
To that within him, he became
Considerably uninviting
To those, who meditation slighting,
Were moulded in a different frame.

V.

And he scorned them, and they scorned him;
And he scorned all they did; and they
Did all that men of their own trim
Are wont to do to please their whim,
Drinking, lying, swearing, play.

VI.

Such were his fellow-servants; thus
His virtue, like our own, was built
Too much on that indignant fuss
Hypocrite Pride stirs up in us
To bully one another's guilt.

VII.

He had a mind which was somehow
At once circumference and centre
Of all he might or feel or know;
Nothing went ever out, although
Something did ever enter.

VIII.

He had as much imagination
 As a pint-pot;—he never could
 Fancy another situation,
 From which to dart his contemplation,
 Than that wherein he stood.

IX.

Yet his was individual mind,
 And new created all he saw
 In a new manner, and refined
 Those new creations, and combined
 Them, by a master-spirit's law.

X.

Thus—though unimaginative—
 An apprehension clear, intense,
 Of his mind's work, had made alive
 The things it wrought on; I believe
 Wakening a sort of thought in sense.

XI.

But from the first 'twas Peter's drift
 To be a kind of moral eunuch,
 He touched the hem of Nature's shift,
 Felt faint—and never dared uplift
 The closest, all-concealing tunic.

XII.

She laughed the while, with an arch smile,
 And kissed him with a sister's kiss,
 And said—"My best Diogenes,
 I love you well—but, if you please,
 Tempt not again my deepest bliss.

XIII.

"'Tis you are cold—for I not coy,
 Yield love for love, frank, warm and true;
 And Burns, a Scottish peasant boy—
 His errors prove it—knew my joy
 More, learned friend, than you.

XIV.

*"Bocca bacciata non perde ventura
 Anzi rinnuova come fa la luna:—*

So thought Boccaccio, whose sweet words might cure a
Male prude, like you, from what you now endure, a
Low-tide in soul, like a stagnant laguna."

XV.

Then Peter rubbed his eyes severe,
And smoothed his spacious forehead down,
With his broad palm;—'twixt love and fear,
He looked, as he no doubt felt, queer,
And in his dream sate down.

XVI.

The Devil was no uncommon creature;
A leaden-witted thief—just huddled
Out of the dross and scum of nature;
A toad-like lump of limb and feature,
With mind, and heart, and fancy muddled.

XVII.

He was that heavy, dull, cold thing,
The spirit of evil well may be:
A drone too base to have a sting;
Who gluts, and grimes his lazy wing,
And calls lust, luxury.

XVIII.

Now he was quite the kind of wight
Round whom collect, at a fixed æra,
Venison, turtle, hock, and claret,—
Good cheer—and those who come to share it—
And best East Indian madeira!

XIX.

It was his fancy to invite
Men of science, wit, and learning,
Who came to lend each other light;
He proudly thought that his gold's might
Had set those spirits burning.

XX.

And men of learning, science, wit,
Considered him as you and I
Think of some rotten tree, and sit
Lounging and dining under it,
Exposed to the wide sky.

XXI.

And all the while, with loose fat smile,
The willing wretch sat winking there,
Believing 'twas his power that made
That jovial scene—and that all paid
Homage to his unnoticed chair.

XXII.

Though to be sure this place was Hell;
He was the Devil—and all they—
What though the claret circled well,
And wit, like ocean, rose and fell?—
Were damned eternally.

PART THE FIFTH.

GRACE.

I.

AMONG the guests who often staid
Till the Devil's petits-soupers,
A man there came, fair as a maid,
And Peter noted what he said,
Standing behind his master's chair.

II.

He was a mighty poet—and
A subtle-souled psychologist;
All things he seemed to understand,
Of old or new—of sea or land—
But his own mind—which was a mist.

III.

This was a man who might have turned
Hell into Heaven—and so in gladness
A Heaven unto himself have earned;
But he in shadows undiscerned
Trusted,—and damned himself to madness.

IV.

He spoke of poetry, and how
“Divine it was—a light—a love—

A spirit which like wind doth blow
As it listeth, to and fro;
A dew rained down from God above.

V.

"A power which comes and goes like dream,
And which none can ever trace—
Heaven's light on earth—Truth's brightest beam."
And when he ceased there lay the gleam
Of those words upon his face.

VI.

Now Peter, when he heard such talk,
Would, heedless of a broken pate,
Stand like a man asleep, or baulk
Some wishing guest of knife or fork,
Or drop and break his master's plate.

VII.

At night he oft would start and wake
Like a lover, and began
In a wild measure songs to make
On moor, and glen, and rocky lake,
And on the heart of man—

VIII.

And on the universal sky—
And the wide earth's bosom green,—
And the sweet, strange mystery
Of what beyond these things may lie,
And yet remain unseen.

IX.

For in his thought he visited
The spots in which, ere dead and damned,
He his wayward life had led;
Yet knew not whence the thoughts were fed,
Which thus his fancy crammed.

X.

And these obscure remembrances
Stirred such harmony in Peter,
That whensoever he should please,
He could speak of rocks and trees
In poetic metre.

XI.

For though it was without a sense
Of memcry, yet he remembered well
Many a ditch and quick-set fence;
Of lakes he had intelligence,
He knew something of heath, and fell.

XII.

He had also dim recollections
Of pedlars tramping on their rounds;
Milk-pans and pails; and odd collections
Of saws, and proverbs; and reflections
Old parsons make in burying-grounds.

XIII.

But Peter's verse was clear, and came
Announcing from the frozen hearth
Of a cold age, that none might tame
The soul of that diviner flame
It augured to the Earth.

XIV.

Like gentle rains, on the dry plains,
Making that green which late was grey,
Or like the sudden moon, that stains
Some gloomy chamber's window panes
With a broad light like day.

XV.

For language was in Peter's hand,
Like clay, while he was yet a potter;
And he made songs for all the land,
Sweet both to feel and understand,
As pipkins late to mountain Cotter.

XVI.

And Mr. —, the bookseller,
Gave twenty pounds for some;—then scorning
A footman's yellow coat to wear,
Peter, too proud of heart, I fear,
Instantly gave the Devil warning.

XVII.

Whereat the Devil took offence,
And swore in his soul a great oath then,

"That for his damned impertinence,
He'd bring him to a proper sense
Of what was due to gentlemen!"—

PART THE SIXTH.

DAMNATION.

I.

"O THAT mine enemy had written
A book!"—cried Job:—a fearful curse;
If to the Arab, as the Briton,
'Twas galling to be critic-bitten:—
The Devil to Peter wished no worse.

II.

When Peter's next new book found vent,
The Devil to all the first Reviews
A copy of it sily sent,
With five-pound note as compliment,
And this short notice—"Pray abuse."

III.

Then *seriatim*, month and quarter,
Appeared such mad tirades.—One said—
"Peter seduced Mrs. Foy's daughter,
Then drowned the mother in Ullswater,
The last thing as he went to bed."

IV.

Another—"Let him shave his head!
Where's Dr. Willis?—Or is he joking?
What does the rascal mean or hope,
No longer imitating Pope,
In that barbarian Shakespeare poking?"

V.

One more, "Is incest not enough?
And must there be adultery too?
Grace after meat? Miscreant and Liar!
Thief! Blackguard! Scoundrel! Fool! Hell-fire
Is twenty times too good for you.

VI.

"By that last book of yours WE think
 You've double damned yourself to scorn;
 We warned you whilst yet on the brink
 You stood. From your black name will shrink
 The babe that is unborn."

VII.

All these Reviews the Devil made
 Up in a parcel, which he had
 Safely to Peter's house conveyed.
 For carriage, ten-pence Peter paid—
 Untied them—read them—went half mad.

VIII.

"What!" cried he, "this is my reward
 For nights of thought, and days of toil?
 Do poets, but to be abhorred
 By men of whom they never heard,
 Consume their spirits' oil?"

IX.

"What have I done to them?—and who
 Is Mrs. Foy? 'Tis very cruel
 To speak of me and Betty so!
 Adultery! God defend me! Oh!
 I've half a mind to fight a duel.

X.

"Or," cried he, a grave look collecting,
 "Is it my genius, like the moon,
 Sets those who stand her face inspecting,
 That face within their brain reflecting,
 Like a crazed bell-chime, out of tune?"

XI.

For Peter did not know the town,
 But thought, as country readers do,
 For half a guinea or a crown,
 He bought oblivion or renown
 From God's own voice¹ in a review.

¹ *Vox populi, vox dei.* As Mr. Godwin truly observes of a more famous saying, of some merit as a popular maxim, but totally destitute of philosophical accuracy.

XII.

All Peter did on this occasion
 Was, writing some sad stuff in prose.
 It is a dangerous invasion
 When poets criticize; their station
 Is to delight, not pose.

XIII.

The Devil then sent to Leipsic fair,
 For Born's translation of Kant's book;
 A world of words, tail foremost, where
 Right—wrong—false—true—and foul—and fair,
 As in a lottery-wheel are shook.

XIV.

Five thousand crammed octavo pages
 Of German psychologies,—he
 Who his *furor verborum* assuages
 Thereon, deserves just seven months' wages
 More than will e'er be due to me.

XV.

I looked on them nine several days,
 And then I saw that they were bad;
 A friend, too, spoke in their dispraise,—
 He never read them;—with amaze
 I found Sir William Drummond had.

XVI.

When the book came, the Devil sent
 It to P. Verbovale,¹ Esquire,
 With a brief note of compliment,
 By that night's Carlisle mail. It went,
 And set his soul on fire.

XVII.

Fire, which *ex luce præbens fumum*,
 Made him beyond the bottom see
 Of truth's clear well—when I and you Ma'am,
 Go, as we shall do, *subter humum*,
 We may know more than he.

¹ Quasi, *Qui valet verba*:—i.e. all the words which have been, are, or may be expended by, for, against, with, or on him. A sufficient proof of the utility of this history. Peter's progenitor who selected this name seems to have possessed a *pure anticipated cognition* of the nature and modesty of this ornament of his posterity.

XVIII.

Now Peter ran to seed in soul
Into a walking paradox;
For he was neither part nor whole,
Nor good, nor bad—nor knave nor fool,
—Among the woods and rocks.

XIX.

Furious he rode, where late he ran,
Lashing and spurring his tame hobby;
Turned to a formal puritan,
A solemn and unsexual man,—
He half believed *White Obi*.

XX.

This steed in vision he would ride,
High trotting over nine-inch bridges,
With Flibbertigibbet, imp of pride,
Mocking and mowing by his side—
A mad-brained goblin for a guide—
Over corn-fields, gates, and hedges.

XXI.

After these ghastly rides, he came
Home to his heart, and found from thence
Much stolen of its accustomed flame;
His thoughts grew weak, drowsy, and lame
Of their intelligence.

XXII.

To Peter's view, all seemed one hue;
He was no whig, he was no tory;
No Deist and no Christian he;—
He got so subtle, that to be
Nothing, was all his glory.

XXIII.

One single point in his belief
From his organization sprung,
The heart-enrooted faith, the chief
Ear in his doctrines' blighted sheaf,
That "happiness is wrong;"

XXIV.

So thought Calvin and Dominic;
So think their fierce successors, who

Even now would neither stint nor stick
Our flesh from off our bones to pick,
If they might "do their do."

XXV.

His morals thus were undermined:—
The old Peter—the hard, old Potter
Was born anew within his mind;
He grew dull, harsh, sly, unrefined,
As when he tramped beside the Otter.¹

XXVI.

In the death hues of agony
Lambently flashing from a fish,
Now Peter felt amused to see
Shades like a rainbow's rise and flee,
Mixed with a certain hungry wish.²

XXVII.

So in his Country's dying face
He looked—and lovely as she lay,
Seeking in vain his last embrace,
Wailing her own abandoned case,
With hardened sneer he turned away:

XXVIII.

And coolly to his own soul said;—
"Do you not think that we might make
A poem on her when she's dead:—
Or, no—a thought is in my head—
Her shroud for a new sheet I'll take.

XXIX.

"My wife wants one.—Let who will bury
This mangled corpse! And I and you,

¹ A famous river in the new Atlantis of the Dynastophylic Pantisocratists.

² See the description of the beautiful colours produced during the agonizing death of a number of trout, in the fourth part of a long poem in blank verse, published within a few years. That poem contains curious evidence of the gradual hardening of a strong but circumscribed sensibility, of the perversion of a penetrating but panic-stricken understanding. The author might have derived a lesson which he had probably forgotten from these sweet and sublime verses.

This lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,
Taught both by what she* shows and what conceals,
Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels.

* Nature.

My dearest Soul, will then make merry,
As the Prince Regent did with Sherry,—
Aye—and at last desert me too.”

XXX.

And so his Soul would not be gay,
But moaned within him; like a fawn
Moaning within a cave, it lay
Wounded and wasting, day by day,
Till all its life of life was gone.

XXXI.

As troubled skies stain waters clear,
The storm in Peter's heart and mind
Now made his verses dark and queer:
They were the ghosts of what they were,
Shaking dim grave-clothes in the wind.

XXXII.

For he now raved enormous folly,
Of Baptisms, Sunday-schools, and Graves,
'Twould make George Colman melancholy,
To have heard him, like a male Molly,
Chaunting those stupid staves.

XXXIII.

Yet the Reviews, who heaped abuse
On Peter while he wrote for freedom,
So soon as in his song they spy,
The folly which soothes tyranny,
Praise him, for those who feed 'em.

XXXIV.

“He was a man, too great to scan;—
A planet lost in truth's keen rays:—
His virtue, awful and prodigious;—
He was the most sublime, religious,
Pure-minded Poet of these days.”

XXXV.

As soon as he read that, cried Peter,
“Eureka! I have found the way
To make a better thing of metre
Than e'er was made by living creature
Up to this blessed day.”

XXXVI.

Then Peter wrote odes to the Devil;—
 In one of which he meekly said:
 "May Carnage and Slaughter,
 Thy niece and thy daughter,
 May Rapine and Famine,
 Thy gorge ever cramming,
 Glut thee with living and dead!

XXXVII.

"May death and damnation,
 And consternation,
 Flit up from hell with pure intent!
 Slash them at Manchester,
 Glasgow, Leeds and Chester;
 Drench all with blood from Avon to Trent.

XXXVIII.

"Let thy body-guard yeomen
 Hew down babes and women,
 And laugh with bold triumph till Heaven be rent.
 When Moloch in Jewry,
 Munched children with fury,
 It was thou, Devil, dining with pure intent."¹

PART THE SEVENTH.

DOUBLE DAMNATION.

I.

THE Devil now knew his proper cue.—
 Soon as he read the ode, he drove

¹ It is curious to observe how often extremes meet. Cobbett and Peter use the same language for a different purpose: Peter is indeed a sort of metrical Cobbett. Cobbett is, however, more mischievous than Peter, because he pollutes a holy and now unconquerable cause with the principles of legitimate murder; whilst the other only makes a bad one ridiculous and odious.

If either Peter or Cobbett should see this note, each will feel more indignation at being compared to the other than at any censure implied in the moral perversion laid to their charge.

To his friend Lord MacMurderchouse's,
A man of interest in both houses,
And said:—"For money or for love,

II.

"Pray find some cure or sinecure;
To feed from the superfluous taxes,
A friend of ours—a poet—fewer
Have fluttered tamer to the lure
Than he." His lordship stands and racks his

III.

Stupid brains, while one might count
As many beads as he had boroughs,—
At length replies; from his mean front,
Like one who rubs out an account,
Smoothing away the unmeaning furrows:

IV.

"It happens fortunately, dear Sir,
I can. I hope I need require
No pledge from you, that he will stir
In our affairs;—like Oliver,
That he'll be worthy of his hire."

V.

These words exchanged, the news sent off
To Peter, home the Devil hied,—
Took to his bed; he had no cough,
No doctor,—meat and drink enough,—
Yet that same night he died.

VI.

The Devil's corpse was leaded down;
His decent heirs enjoyed his pelf,
Mourning-coaches, many a one,
Followed his hearse along the town:—
Where was the devil himself?

VII.

When Peter heard of his promotion,
His eyes grew like two stars for bliss:
There was a bow of sleek devotion,
Engendering in his back; each motion
Seemed a Lord's shoe to kiss.

VIII.

He hired a house, bought plate, and made
A genteel drive up to his door,
With sifted gravel neatly laid,—
As if defying all who said,
Peter was ever poor.

IX.

But a disease soon struck into
The very life and soul of Peter—
He walked about—slept—had the hue
Of health upon his cheeks—and few
Dug better—none a heartier eater.

X.

And yet a strange and horrid curse
Clung upon Peter, night and day,
Month after month the thing grew worse,
And deadlier than in this my verse,
I can find strength to say.

XI.

Peter was dull—he was at first
Dull—O, so dull—so very dull!
Whether he talked, wrote, or rehearsed—
Still with this dulness was he cursed—
Dull—beyond all conception—dull.

XII.

No one could read his books—no mortal,
But a few natural friends, would hear him;
The parson came not near his portal;
His state was like that of the immortal
Described by Swift—no man could bear him.

XIII.

His sister, wife, and children yawned,
With a long, slow, and drear ennui,
All human patience far beyond;
Their hopes of Heaven each would have pawned,
Any where else to be.

XIV.

But in his verse, and in his prose,
The essence of his dulness was

Concentred and compressed so close,
 'Twould have made Guatimozin doze
 On his red gridiron of brass.

XV.

A printer's boy, folding those pages,
 Fell slumbrously upon one side;
 Like those famed seven who slept three ages.
 To wakeful frenzy's vigil rages,
 As opiates, were the same applied.

XVI.

Even the Reviewers who were hired
 To do the work of his reviewing,
 With adamantine nerves, grew tired;—
 Gaping and torpid they retired,
 To dream of what they should be doing.

XVII.

And worse and worse, the drowsy curse
 Yawned in him, till it grew a pest—
 A wide contagious atmosphere,
 Creeping like cold through all things near;
 A power to infect and to infest.

XVIII.

His servant-maids and dogs grew dull;
 His kitten late a sportive elf,
 The woods and lakes, so beautiful,
 Of dim stupidity were full,
 All grew dull as Peter's self.

XIX.

The earth under his feet—the springs,
 Which lived within it a quick life,
 The air, the winds of many wings,
 That fan it with new murmurings,
 Were dead to their harmonious strife.

XX.

The birds and beasts within the wood,
 The insects, and each creeping thing,
 Were now a silent multitude;
 Love's work was left unwrought—no brood
 Near Peter's house took wing.

XXI.

And every neighbouring cottager
 Stupidly yawned upon the other:
 No jack-ass brayed; no little cur
 Cocked up his ears;—no man would stir
 To save a dying mother.

XXII.

Yet all from that charmed district went
 But some half-idiot and half knave,
 Who rather than pay any rent,
 Would live with marvellous content,
 Over his father's grave.

XXIII.

No bailiff dared within that space,
 For fear of the dull charm, to enter;
 A man would bear upon his face,
 For fifteen months in any case,
 The yawn of such a venture.

XXIV.

Seven miles above—below—around—
 This pest of dulness holds its sway;
 A ghastly life without a sound;
 To Peter's soul the spell is bound—
 How should it ever pass away?

LETTER TO MARIA GISBORNE.

Leghorn, July 1, 1820.

THE spider spreads her webs, whether she be
 In poet's tower, cellar, or barn, or tree;
 The silk-worm in the dark green mulberry leaves
 His winding sheet and cradle ever weaves;
 So I, a thing whom moralists call worm,
 Sit spinning still round this decaying form,
 From the fine threads of rare and subtle thought—
 No net of words in garish colours wrought

To catch the idle buzzers of the day—
 But a soft cell, where when that fades away, 10
 Memory may clothe in wings my living name
 And feed it with the asphodels of fame,
 Which in those hearts which must remember me
 Grow, making love an immortality.

Whoever should behold me now, I wist, 15
 Would think I were a mighty mechanist,
 Bent with sublime Archimedean art
 To breathe a soul into the iron heart
 Of some machine portentous, or strange gin,
 Which by the force of figured spells might win 20
 Its way over the sea, and sport therein;
 For round the walls are hung dread engines, such
 As Vulcan never wrought for Jove to clutch
 Ixion or the Titan:—or the quick
 Wit of that man of God, St. Dominic, 25
 To convince Atheist, Turk or Heretic,
 Or those in philanthropic council met,
 Who thought to pay some interest for the debt
 They owed to Jesus Christ for their salvation,
 By giving a faint foretaste of damnation 30
 To Shakespeare, Sidney, Spenser and the rest
 Who made our land an island of the blest,
 When lamp-like Spain, who now relumes her fire
 On Freedom's hearth, grew dim with Empire:—
 With thumbscrews, wheels, with tooth and spike and jag,
 Which fishers found under the utmost crag 35
 Of Cornwall and the storm-encompassed isles,
 Where to the sky the rude sea rarely smiles
 Unless in treacherous wrath, as on the morn
 When the exulting elements in scorn 40
 Satiated with destroyed destruction, lay
 Sleeping in beauty on their mangled prey,
 As panthers sleep;—and other strange and dread
 Magical forms the brick floor overspread——
 Proteus transformed to metal did not make 45
 More figures, or more strange; nor did he take
 Such shapes of unintelligible brass,

Or heap himself in such a horrid mass
 Of tin and iron not to be understood;
 And forms of unimaginable wood, 50
 To puzzle Tubal Cain and all his brood:
 Great screws, and cones, and wheels, and groovèd blocks,
 The elements of what will stand the shocks
 Of wave and wind and time.—Upon the table
 More knacks and quips there be than I am able 55
 To catalogize in this verse of mine:—
 A pretty bowl of wood—not full of wine,
 But quicksilver; that dew which the gnomes drink
 When at their subterranean toil they swink,
 Pledging the demons of the earthquake, who 60
 Reply to them in lava—cry halloo!
 And call out to the cities o'er their head,—
 Roofs, towers and shrines, the dying and the dead,
 Crash through the chinks of earth—and then all quaff
 Another rouse, and hold their sides and laugh. 65
 This quicksilver no gnome has drunk—within
 The walnut bowl it lies, veinèd and thin,
 In colour like the wake of light that stains
 The Tuscan deep, when from the moist moon rains
 The inmost shower of it's white fire—the breeze 70
 Is still—blue heaven smiles over the pale seas.
 And in this bowl of quicksilver—for I
 Yield to the impulse of an infancy
 Outlasting manhood—I have made to float
 A rude idealism of a paper boat:— 75
 A hollow screw with cogs—Henry will know
 The thing I mean and laugh at me,—if so
 He fears not I should do more mischief.—Next
 Lie bills and calculations much perplexed,
 With steam-boats, frigates, and machinery quaint 80
 Traced over them in blue and yellow paint.
 Then comes a range of mathematical
 Instruments, for plans nautical and statical;
 A heap of rosin, a queer broken glass
 With ink in it;—a china cup that was 85
 What it will never be again, I think,
 A thing from which sweet lips were wont to drink

The liquor doctors rail at—and which I
 Will quaff in spite of them—and when we die
 We'll toss up who died first of drinking tea, 90
 And cry out,—heads or tails? where'er we be.
 Near that a dusty paint box, some odd hooks,
 A half-burnt match, an ivory block, three books,
 Where conic sections, spherics, logarithms,
 To great Laplace, from Saunderson and Sims, 95
 Lie heaped in their harmonious disarray
 Of figures,—disentangle them who may.
 Baron de Tott's Memoirs beside them lie,
 And some odd volumes of old chemistry.
 Near those a most inexplicable thing, 100
 With lead in the middle—I'm conjecturing
 How to make Henry understand; but no—
 I'll leave, as Spenser says, with many mo,
 This secret in the pregnant womb of time,
 Too vast a matter for so weak a rhyme. 105

And here like some weird Archimage sit I,
 Plotting dark spells, and devilish enginery,
 The self-impelling steam-wheels of the mind
 Which pump up oaths from clergymen, and grind
 The gentle spirit of our meek reviews 110
 Into a powdery foam of salt abuse,
 Ruffling the ocean of their self-content;—
 I sit—and smile or sigh as is my bent,
 But not for them—Libeccio rushes round
 With an inconstant and an idle sound, 115
 I heed him more than them—the thunder-smoke
 Is gathering on the mountains, like a cloak
 Folded athwart their shoulders broad and bare;
 The ripe corn under the undulating air
 Undulates like an ocean;—and the vines 120
 Are trembling wide in all their trellised lines—
 The murmur of the awakening sea doth fill
 The empty pauses of the blast;—the hill
 Looks hoary through the white electric rain,
 And from the glens beyond, in sullen strain, 125
 The interrupted thunder howls; above

One chasm of heaven smiles, like the eye of Love
 On the 'unquiet world;—while such things are,
 How could one worth your friendship heed the war
 Of worms? the shriek of the world's carrion jays, 130
 Their censure, or their wonder, or their praise?

You are not here! the quaint witch Memory sees
 In vacant chairs, your absent images,
 And points where once you sat, and now should be
 But are not.—I demand if ever we 135
 Shall meet as then we met;—and she replies,
 Veiling in awe her second-sighted eyes;
 "I know the past alone—but summon home
 "My sister Hope,—she speaks of all to come."
 But I, an old diviner, who knew well 140
 Every false verse of that sweet oracle,
 Turned to the sad enchantress once again,
 And sought a respite from my gentle pain,
 In citing every passage o'er and o'er
 Of our communion—how on the sea shore 145
 We watched the ocean and the sky together,
 Under the roof of blue Italian weather;
 How I ran home through last year's thunder-storm,
 And felt the transverse lightning linger warm
 Upon my cheek—and how we often made 150
 Feasts for each other, where good will outweighed
 The frugal luxury of our country cheer,
 As well it might, were it less firm and clear
 Than ours must ever be;—and how we spun
 A shroud of talk to hide us from the sun 155
 Of this familiar life, which seems to be
 But is not,—or is but quaint mockery
 Of all we would believe, and sadly blame
 The jarring and inexplicable frame
 Of this wrong world:—and then anatomize 160
 The purposes and thoughts of men whose eyes
 Were closed in distant years;—or widely guess
 The issue of the earth's great business,
 When we shall be as we no longer are—
 Like babbling gossips safe, who hear the war 165

Of winds, and sigh, but tremble not;—or how
 You listened to some interrupted flow
 Of visionary rhyme,—in joy and pain
 Struck from the inmost fountains of my brain,
 With little skill perhaps;—or how we sought 170
 Those deepest wells of passion or of thought
 Wrought by wise poets in the waste of years,
 Staining their sacred waters with our tears;
 Quenching a thirst ever to be renewed!
 Or how I, wisest lady! then indued 175
 The language of a land which now is free,
 And winged with thoughts of truth and majesty,
 Flits round the tyrant's sceptre like a cloud,
 And bursts the peopled prisons, and cries aloud,
 "My name is Legion!"—that majestic tongue 180
 Which Calderon over the desert flung
 Of ages and of nations; and which found
 An echo in our hearts, and with the sound
 Startled oblivion;—thou wert then to me
 As is a nurse—when inarticulately 185
 A child would talk as it's grown parents do.
 If living winds the rapid clouds pursue,
 If hawks chase doves through the ætherial way,
 Huntsmen the innocent deer, and beasts their prey,
 Why should not we rouse with the spirit's blast 190
 Out of the forest of the pathless past
 These recollected pleasures?

You are now
 In London, that great sea, whose ebb and flow
 At once is deaf and loud, and on the shore
 Vomits its wrecks, and still howls on for more. 195
 Yet in its depth what treasures! You will see
 That which was Godwin,—greater none than he
 Though fallen—and fallen on evil times—to stand
 Among the spirits of our age and land,
 Before the dread tribunal of *to come* 200
 The foremost,—while Rebuke cowers pale and dumb.
 You will see Coleridge—he who sits obscure
 In the exceeding lustre, and the pure
 Intense irradiation of a mind,

Which, with its own internal lightning blind, 205
Flags wearily through darkness and despair—
A cloud-encircled meteor of the air,
A hooded eagle among blinking owls.—
You will see Hunt—one of those happy souls
Which are the salt of the earth, and without whom 210
This world would smell like what it is—a tomb;
Who is, what others seem; his room no doubt
Is still adorned by many a cast from Shout,
With graceful flowers tastefully placed about;
And coronals of bay from ribbons hung, 215
And brighter wreaths in neat disorder flung;
The gifts of the most learn'd among some dozens
Of female friends, sisters-in-law and cousins.
And there is he with his eternal puns,
Which beat the dullest brain for smiles, like duns 220
Thundering for money at a poet's door;
Alas! it is no use to say, "I'm poor!"
Or oft in graver mood, when he will look
Things wiser than were ever read in book,
Except in Shakespeare's wisest tenderness.— 225
You will see Hogg,—and I cannot express
His virtues,—though I know that they are great,
Because he locks, then barricades the gate
Within which they inhabit;—of his wit
And wisdom, you'll cry out when you are bit. 230
He is a pearl within an oyster shell,
One of the richest of the deep;—and there
Is English Peacock with his mountain fair
Turned into a Flamingo;—that shy bird
That gleams i' the Indian air—have you not heard 235
When a man marries, dies, or turns Hindoo,
His best friends hear no more of him?—but you
Will see him, and will like him too, I hope,
With the milk-white Snowdonian Antelope
Matched with this cameleopard—his fine wit 240
Makes such a wound, the knife is lost in it;
A strain too learn'd for a shallow age,
Too wise for selfish bigots; let his page
Which charms the chosen spirits of the time,

Fold itself up for the serener clime 245
 Of years to come, and find it's recompense
 In that just expectation.—Wit and sense,
 Virtue and human knowledge; all that might
 Make this dull world a business of delight,
 Are all combined in Horace Smith.—And these, 250
 With some exceptions, which I need not tease
 Your patience by descanting on,—are all
 You and I know in London.

I recall

My thoughts, and bid you look upon the night.
 As water does a sponge, so the moonlight 255
 Fills the void, hollow, universal air—
 What see you?—unpavilioned heaven is fair
 Whether the moon, into her chamber gone,
 Leaves midnight to the golden stars, or wan
 Climbs with diminished beams the azure steep; 260
 Or whether clouds sail o'er the inverse deep,
 Piloted by the many-wandering blast,
 And the rare stars rush through them dim and fast :——
 All this is beautiful in every land.——
 But what see you beside?—a shabby stand 265
 Of Hackney coaches—a brick house or wall.
 Fencing some lonely court, white with the scrawl
 Of our unhappy politics;—or worse—
 A wretched woman reeling by, whose curse
 Mixed with the watchman's, partner of her trade, 270
 You must accept in place of serenade—
 Or yellow-haired Pollonia murmuring
 To Henry, some unutterable thing.
 I see a chaos of green leaves and fruit
 Built round dark caverns, even to the root 275
 Of the living stems that feed them—in whose bowers
 There sleep in their dark dew the folded flowers;
 Beyond, the surface of the unsickled corn
 Trembles not in the slumbering air, and borne
 In circles quaint, and ever changing dance, 280
 Like winged stars the fire-flies flash and glance,
 Pale in the open moonshine, but each one
 Under the dark trees seems a little sun,

A meteor tamed; a fixed star gone astray
 From the silver regions of the milky way;— 285
 Afar the Contadino's song is heard,
 Rude, but made sweet by distance—and a bird
 Which cannot be the Nightingale, and yet
 I know none else that sings so sweet as it
 At this late hour;—and then all is still—— 290
 Now Italy or London, which you will!

Next winter you must pass with me; I'll have
 My house by that time turned into a grave
 Of dead despondence and low-thoughted care,
 And all the dreams which our tormentors are; 295
 Oh! that Hunt, Hogg, Peacock and Smith were there,
 With every thing belonging to them fair!—
 We will have books, Spanish, Italian, Greek;
 And ask one week to make another week
 As like his father, as I'm unlike mine, 300
 Which is not his fault, as you may divine.
 Though we eat little flesh and drink no wine,
 Yet let's be merry: we'll have tea and toast;
 Custards for supper, and an endless host
 Of syllabubs and jellies and mince-pies, 305
 And other such lady-like luxuries,—
 Feasting on which we will philosophize!
 And we'll have fires out of the Grand Duke's wood,
 To thaw the six weeks' winter in our blood.
 And then we'll talk;—what shall we talk about? 310
 Oh! there are themes enough for many a bout
 Of thought-entangled descant;—as to nerves—
 With cones and parallelograms and curves
 I've sworn to strangle them if once they dare
 To bother me—when you are with me there. 315
 And they shall never more sip laudanum,
 From Helicon or Himeros¹;—well, come,
 And in despite of God and of the devil,
 We'll make our friendly philosophic revel
 Outlast the leafless time; till buds and flowers 320

¹ *Ἥμερος*, from which the river Himera was named, is, with some slight shade of difference, a synonyme of Love.

Warn the obscure inevitable hours,
 Sweet meeting by sad parting to renew ;—
 “Tomorrow to fresh woods and pastures new.”

THE WITCH OF ATLAS.

TO MARY,

(ON HER OBJECTING TO THE FOLLOWING POEM, UPON THE
 SCORE OF ITS CONTAINING NO HUMAN INTEREST.)

I.

How, my dear Mary, are you critic-bitten,
 (For vipers kill, though dead,) by some review,
 That you condemn these verses I have written,
 Because they tell no story, false or true!
 What, though no mice are caught by a young kitten,
 May it not leap and play as grown cats do,
 Till its claws come? Prithee, for this one time,
 Content thee with a visionary rhyme.

II.

What hand would crush the silken-wingèd fly,
 The youngest of inconstant April's minions,
 Because it cannot climb the purest sky,
 Where the swan sings, amid the sun's dominions?
 Not thine. Thou knowest 'tis its doom to die,
 When day shall hide within her twilight pinions,
 The lucent eyes, and the eternal smile,
 Serene as thine, which lent it life awhile.

III.

To thy fair feet a wingèd Vision came,
 Whose date should have been longer than a day,
 And o'er thy head did beat its wings for fame,
 And in thy sight its fading plumes display;
 The watery bow burned in the evening flame,
 But the shower fell, the swift sun went his way—
 And that is dead.— O, let me not believe
 That any thing of mine is fit to live!

IV.

Wordsworth informs us he was nineteen years
 Considering and retouching Peter Bell;
 Watering his laurels with the killing tears
 Of slow, dull care, so that their roots to hell
 Might pierce, and their wide branches blot the spheres
 Of heaven, with dewy leaves and flowers; this well
 May be, for Heaven and Earth conspire to foil
 The over-busy gardener's blundering toil.

V.

My Witch indeed is not so sweet a creature
 As Ruth or Lucy, whom his graceful praise
 Clothes for our grandsons—but she matches Peter,
 Though he took nineteen years, and she three days
 In dressing. Light the vest of flowing metre
 She wears; he, proud as dandy with his stays,
 Has hung upon his wiry limbs a dress
 Like King Lear's "looped and windowed raggedness."

VI.

If you strip Peter, you will see a fellow,
 Scorched by Hell's hyperequatorial climate
 Into a kind of a sulphureous yellow:
 A lean mark, hardly fit to fling a rhyme at;
 In shape a Scaramouch, in hue Othello.
 If you unveil my Witch, no priest nor primate
 Can shrive you of that sin,—if sin there be
 In love, when it becomes idolatry.

THE WITCH OF ATLAS.

I.

BEFORE those cruel Twins, whom at one birth
 Incestuous Change bore to her father Time,
 Error and Truth, had hunted from the Earth
 All those bright natures which adorned its prime,
 And left us nothing to believe in, worth
 The pains of putting into learned rhyme,
 A lady-witch there lived on Atlas' mountain
 Within a cavern, by a secret fountain.

II.

Her mother was one of the Atlantides :

The all-beholding Sun had ne'er beholden
In his wide voyage o'er continents and seas
So fair a creature, as she lay enfolden
In the warm shadow of her loveliness;—

He kissed her with his beams, and made all golden
The chamber of grey rock in which she lay—
She, in that dream of joy, dissolved away.

III.

'Tis said, she first was changed into a vapour,

And then into a cloud, such clouds as flit,
Like splendour-wingèd moths about a taper,

Round the red west when the sun dies in it:
And then into a meteor, such as caper

On hill-tops when the moon is in a fit:
Then, into one of those mysterious stars
Which hide themselves between the Earth and Mars.

IV.

Ten times the Mother of the Months had bent

Her bow beside the folding-star, and bidden
With that bright sign the billows to indent

The sea-deserted sand—like children chidden,
At her command they ever came and went—

Since in that cave a dewy splendour hidden
Took shape and motion: with the living form
Of this embodied Power, the cave grew warm.

V.

A lovely lady garmented in light

From her own beauty—deep her eyes, as are
Two openings of unfathomable night

Seen through a Temple's cloven roof—her hair
Dark—the dim brain whirls dizzy with delight,

Picturing her form; her soft smiles shone afar,
And her low voice was heard like love, and drew
All living things towards this wonder new.

VI.

And first the spotted cameleopard came,

And then the wise and fearless elephant;

Then the sly serpent, in the golden flame
Of his own volumes intervolved ;—all gaunt
And sanguine beasts her gentle looks made tame.
They drank before her at her sacred fount;
And every beast of beating heart grew bold,
Such gentleness and power even to behold.

VII.

The brinded lioness led forth her young,
That she might teach them how they should forego
Their inborn thirst of death; the pard unstrung
His sinews at her feet, and sought to know
With looks whose motions spoke without a tongue
How he might be as gentle as the doe.
The magic circle of her voice and eyes
All savage natures did imparadise.

VIII.

And old Silenus, shaking a green stick
Of lilies, and the wood-gods in a crew
Came, blithe, as in the olive copses thick
Cicadæ are, drunk with the noonday dew:
And Dryope and Faunus followed quick,
Teazing the God to sing them something new;
Till in this cave they found the lady lone,
Sitting upon a seat of emerald stone.

IX.

And universal Pan, 'tis said, was there,
And though none saw him,—through the adamant
Of the deep mountains, through the trackless air,
And through those living spirits, like a want
He past out of his everlasting lair
Where the quick heart of the great world doth pant,
And felt that wondrous lady all alone,—
And she felt him, upon her emerald throne.

X.

And every nymph of stream and spreading tree,
And every shepherdess of Ocean's flocks,
Who drives her white waves over the green sea,
And Ocean with the brine on his grey locks,
And quaint Priapus with his company,
All came, much wondering how the enwomb'd rocks

Could have brought forth so beautiful a birth;—
Her love subdued their wonder and their mirth.

XI.

The herdsmen and the mountain maidens came,
And the rude kings of pastoral Garamant—
Their spirits shook within them, as a flame
Stirred by the air under a cavern gaunt:
Pigmies, and Polyphemes, by many a name,
Centaur and Satyr, and such shapes as haunt
Wet clefts,—and lumps neither alive nor dead,
Dog-headed, bosom-eyed, and bird-footed.

XII.

For she was beautiful—her beauty made
The bright world dim, and every thing beside
Seemed like the fleeting image of a shade:
No thought of living spirit could abide,
Which to her looks had ever been betrayed,
On any object in the world so wide,
On any hope within the circling skies,
But on her form, and in her inmost eyes.

XIII.

Which when the lady knew, she took her spindle
And twined three threads of fleecy mist, and three
Long lines of light, such as the dawn may kindle
The clouds and waves and mountains with; and she
As many star-beams, ere their lamps could dwindle
In the belated moon, wound skilfully;
And with these threads a subtle veil she wove—
A shadow for the splendour of her love.

XIV.

The deep recesses of her odorous dwelling
Were stored with magic treasures—sounds of air,
Which had the power all spirits of compelling,
Folded in cells of crystal silence there;
Such as we hear in youth, and think the feeling
Will never die—yet ere we are aware,
The feeling and the sound are fled and gone,
And the regret they leave remains alone.

XV.

And there lay Visions swift, and sweet, and quaint,
Each in its thin sheath, like a chrysalis,
Some eager to burst forth, some weak and faint
With the soft burthen of intensest bliss;
It was its work to bear to many a saint
Whose heart adores the shrine which holiest is,
Even Love's:—and others white, green, grey and black,
And of all shapes—and each was at her beck.

XVI.

And odours in a kind of aviary
Of ever-blooming Eden-trees she kept,
Clipt in a floating net, a love-sick Fairy
Had woven from dew-beams while the moon yet slept;
As bats at the wired window of a dairy,
They beat their vans; and each was an adept,
When loosed and missioned, making wings of winds,
To stir sweet thoughts or sad, in destined minds.

XVII.

And liquors clear and sweet, whose healthful might
Could medicine the sick soul to happy sleep,
And change eternal death into a night
Of glorious dreams—or if eyes needs must weep,
Could make their tears all wonder and delight,
She in her crystal vials did closely keep:
If men could drink of those clear vials, 'tis said
The living were not envied of the dead.

XVIII.

Her cave was stored with scrolls of strange device,
The works of some Saturnian Archimage,
Which taught the expiations at whose price
Men from the Gods might win that happy age
Too lightly lost, redeeming native vice;
And which might quench the Earth-consuming rage
Of gold and blood—till men should live and move
Harmonious as the sacred stars above;

XIX.

And how all things that seem untameable,
Not to be checked and not to be confuted,

Obeys the spells of wisdom's wizard skill;
Time, earth and fire—the ocean and the wind,
And all their shapes—and man's imperial will;
And other scrolls whose writings did unbind
The inmost lore of Love—let the profane
Tremble to ask what secrets they contain.

XX.

And wondrous works of substances unknown,
To which the enchantment of her father's power
Had changed those ragged blocks of savage stone,
Were heaped in the recesses of her bower;
Carved lamps and chalices, and vials which shone
In their own golden beams—each like a flower,
Out of whose depth a fire-fly shakes his light
Under a cypress in a starless night.

XXI.

At first she lived alone in this wild home,
And her own thoughts were each a minister,
Clothing themselves, or with the ocean foam,
Or with the wind, or with the speed of fire,
To work whatever purposes might come
Into her mind; such power her mighty Sire
Had girt them with, whether to fly or run,
Through all the regions which he shines upon.

XXII.

The Ocean-nymphs and Hamadryades,
Oreads and Naiads, with long weedy locks,
Offered to do her bidding through the seas,
Under the earth, and in the hollow rocks,
And far beneath the matted roots of trees,
And in the knarled heart of stubborn oaks,
So they might live for ever in the light
Of her sweet presence—each a satellite.

XXIII.

"This may not be," the wizard maid replied;
"The fountains where the Naiades bedew
Their shining hair, at length are drained and dried;
"The solid oaks forget their strength, and strew

"Their latest leaf upon the mountains wide;
"The boundless ocean like a drop of dew
"Will be consumed—the stubborn centre must
"Be scattered, like a cloud of summer dust.

XXIV.

"And ye with them will perish, one by one;—
"If I must sigh to think that this shall be,
"If I must weep when the surviving Sun
"Shall smile on your decay—Oh, ask not me
"To love you till your little race is run;
"I cannot die as ye must—over me
"Your leaves shall glance—the streams in which ye dwell
"Shall be my paths henceforth, and so—farewell!"—

XXV.

She spoke and wept:—the dark and azure well
Sparkled beneath the shower of her bright tears,
And every little circle where they fell
Flung to the cavern-roof inconstant spheres
And intertangled lines of light:—a knell
Of sobbing voices came upon her ears
From those departing Forms, o'er the serene
Of the white streams and of the forest green.

XXVI.

All day the wizard lady sate aloof,
Spelling out scrolls of dread antiquity,
Under the cavern's fountain-lighted roof;
Or broidering the pictured poesy
Of some high tale upon her growing woof,
Which the sweet splendour of her smiles could dye
In hues outshining Heaven—and ever she
Added some grace to the wrought poesy.

XXVII.

While on her hearth lay blazing many a piece
Of sandal wood, rare gums and cinnamon;
Men scarcely know how beautiful fire is—
Each flame of it is as a precious stone
Dissolved in ever-moving light, and this
Belongs to each and all who gaze upon.

The Witch beheld it not, for in her hand
She held a woof that dimmed the burning brand.

XXVIII.

This lady never slept, but lay in trance
All night within the fountain—as in sleep.
Its emerald crags glowed in her beauty's glance;
Through the green splendour of the water deep
She saw the constellations reel and dance
Like fire-flies—and withal did ever keep
The tenour of her contemplations calm,
With open eyes, closed feet and folded palm.

XXIX.

And when the whirlwinds and the clouds descended
From the white pinnacles of that cold hill,
She past at dewfall to a space extended,
Where in a lawn of flowering asphodel
Amid a wood of pines and cedars blended,
There yawned an inextinguishable well
Of crimson fire—full even to the brim,
And overflowing all the margin trim.

XXX.

Within the which she lay when the fierce war
Of wintry winds shook that innocuous liquor
In many a mimic moon and bearded star
O'er woods and lawns;—the serpent heard it flicker
In sleep, and dreaming still, he crept afar—
And when the windless snow descended thicker
Than autumn leaves, she watched it as it came
Melt on the surface of the level flame.

XXXI.

She had a Boat, which some say Vulcan wrought
For Venus, as the chariot of her star;
But it was found too feeble to be fraught
With all the ardours in that sphere which are,
And so she sold it, and Apollo bought
And gave it to this daughter: from a car
Changed to the fairest and the lightest boat
Which ever upon mortal stream did float.

XXXII.

And others say, that, when but three hours old,
The first-born Love out of his cradle leapt,
And clove dun Chaos with his wings of gold,
And like an horticultural adept,
Stole a strange seed, and wrapt it up in mould,
And sowed it in his mother's star, and kept
Watering it all the summer with sweet dew,
And with his wings fanning it as it grew.

XXXIII.

The plant grew strong and green, the snowy flower
Fell, and the long and gourd-like fruit began
To turn the light and dew by inward power.
To its own substance; woven tracery ran
Of light firm texture, ribbed and branching, o'er
The solid rind, like a leaf's veined fan—
Of which Love scooped this boat—and with soft motion
Piloted it round the circumfluous ocean.

XXXIV.

This boat she moored upon her fount, and lit
A living spirit within all its frame,
Breathing the soul of swiftness into it.
Couched on the fountain like a panther tame,
One of the twain at Evan's feet that sit—
Or as on Vesta's sceptre a swift flame—
Or on blind Homer's heart a wingèd thought,—
In joyous expectation lay the boat.

XXXV.

Then by strange art she kneaded fire and snow
Together, tempering the repugnant mass
With liquid love—all things together grow
Through which the harmony of love can pass;
And a fair Shape out of her hands did flow—
A living Image, which did far surpass
In beauty that bright shape of vital stone
Which drew the heart out of Pygmalion.

XXXVI.

A sexless thing it was, and in its growth
It seemed to have developed no defect

Of either sex, yet all the grace of both,—
In gentleness and strength its limbs were decked;
The bosom swelled lightly with its full youth,
The countenance was such as might select
Some artist that his skill should never die,
Imaging forth such perfect purity.

XXXVII.

From its smooth shoulders hung two rapid wings,
Fit to have borne it to the seventh sphere
Tipt with the speed of liquid lightnings,
Dyed in the ardours of the atmosphere:
She led her creature to the boiling springs
Where the light boat was moored, and said: "Sit here!"
And pointed to the prow, and took her seat
Beside the rudder, with opposing feet.

XXXVIII.

And down the streams which clove those mountains vast,
Around their inland islets, and amid
The panther-peopled forests, whose shade cast
Darkness and odours, and a pleasure hid
In melancholy gloom, the pinnacle past;
By many a star-surrounded pyramid
Of icy crag cleaving the purple sky,
And caverns yawning round unfathomably.

XXXIX.

The silver noon into that winding dell,
With slanted gleam athwart the forest tops,
Tempered like golden evening, feebly fell;
A green and glowing light, like that which drops
From folded lilies in which glow-worms dwell,
When earth over her face night's mantle wraps;
Between the severed mountains lay on high
Over the stream, a narrow rift of sky.

XL.

And ever as she went, the Image lay
With folded wings and unawakened eyes;
And o'er its gentle countenance did play
The busy dreams, as thick as summer flies,

Chasing the rapid smiles that would not stay,
And drinking the warm tears, and the sweet sighs
Inhaling, which, with busy murmur vain,
They had aroused from that full heart and brain.

XLI.

And ever down the prone vale, like a cloud
Upon a stream of wind, the pinnacle went:
Now lingering on the pools, in which abode
The calm and darkness of the deep content
In which they paused; now o'er the shallow road
Of white and dancing waters, all besprent
With sand and polished pebbles:—mortal boat
In such a shallow rapid could not float.

XLII.

And down the earthquaking cataracts which shiver
Their snow-like waters into golden air,
Or under chasms unfathomable ever
Sepulchre them, till in their rage they tear
A subterranean portal for the river,
It fled—the circling sunbows did upbear
Its fall down the hoar precipice of spray,
Lighting it far upon its lampless way.

XLIII.

And when the wizard lady would ascend
The labyrinths of some many-winding vale,
Which to the inmost mountain upward tend—
She called “Hermaphroditus!”—and the pale
And heavy hue which slumber could extend
Over its lips and eyes, as on the gale
A rapid shadow from a slope of grass,
Into the darkness of the stream did pass.

XLIV.

And it unfurled its heaven-coloured pinions,
With stars of fire spotting the stream below;
And from above into the Sun's dominions
Flinging a glory, like the golden glow
In which spring clothes her emerald-wingèd minions,
All interwoven with fine feathery snow

And moonlight splendour of intensest rime,
With which frost paints the pines in winter time.

XLV.

And then it winnowed the Elysian air
Which ever hung about that lady bright,
With its ætherial vans—and speeding there,
Like a star up the torrent of the night,
Or a swift eagle in the morning glare
Breasting the whirlwind with impetuous flight,
The pinnacle, oared by those enchanted wings,
Clove the fierce streams towards their upper springs.

XLVI.

The water flashed like sunlight by the prow
Of a noon-wandering meteor flung to Heaven;
The still air seemed as if its waves did flow
In tempest down the mountains; loosely driven
The lady's radiant hair streamed to and fro:
Beneath, the billows having vainly striven
Indignant and impetuous, roared to feel
The swift and steady motion of the keel.

XLVII.

Or, when the weary moon was in the wane,
Or in the noon of interlunar night,
The lady-witch in visions could not chain
Her spirit; but sailed forth under the light
Of shooting stars, and bade extend amain
Its storm-outspeeding wings, the Hermaphrodite;
She to the Austral waters took her way,
Beyond the fabulous Thamondocana.

XLVIII.

Where, like a meadow which no scythe has shaven,
Which rain could never bend, or whirl-blast shake,
With the Antarctic constellations paven,
Canopus and his crew, lay the Austral lake—
There she would build herself a windless haven
Out of the clouds whose moving turrets make
The bastions of the storm, when through the sky
The spirits of the tempest thundered by.

XLIX.

A haven beneath whose translucent floor
The tremulous stars sparkled unfathomably,
And around which the solid vapours hoar,
Based on the level waters, to the sky
Lifted their dreadful crags, and like a shore
Of wintry mountains, inaccessibly
Hemmed in with rifts and precipices grey,
And hanging crags, many a cove and bay.

L.

And whilst the outer lake beneath the lash
Of the wind's scourge, foamed like a wounded thing
And the incessant hail with stony clash
Ploughed up the waters, and the flagging wing
Of the roused cormorant in the lightning flash
Looked like the wreck of some wind-wandering
Fragment of inky thunder-smoke—this haven
Was as a gem to copy Heaven engraven.

LI.

On which that lady played her many pranks,
Circling the image of a shooting star,
Even as a tiger on Hydaspes' banks
Outspeeds the antelopes which speediest are,
In her light boat; and many quips and cranks
She played upon the water, till the car
Of the late moon, like a sick matron wan,
To journey from the misty east began.

LII.

And then she called out of the hollow turrets
Of those high clouds, white, golden and vermilion,
The armies of her ministering spirits—
In mighty legions, million after million,
They came, each troop emblazoning its merits
On meteor flags; and many a proud pavilion
Of the intertexture of the atmosphere
They pitched upon the plain of the calm mere.

LIII.

They framed the imperial tent of their great Queen
Of woven exhalations, underlaid

With lambent lightning-fire, as may be seen
 A dome of thin and open ivory inlaid
 With crimson silk—cressets from the serene
 Hung there, and on the water for her tread
 A tapestry of fleece-like mist was strewn,
 Dyed in the beams of the ascending moon.

LIV.

And on a throne o'erlaid with starlight, caught
 Upon those wandering isles of æry dew,
 Which highest shoals of mountain shipwreck not,
 She sate, and heard all that had happened new
 Between the earth and moon, since they had brought
 The last intelligence—and now she grew
 Pale as that moon, lost in the watery night—
 And now she wept, and now she laughed outright.

LV.

These were tame pleasures; she would often climb
 The steepest ladder of the crudded rack
 Up to some beaked cape of cloud sublime,
 And like Arion on the dolphin's back
 Ride singing through the shoreless air;—oft time
 Following the serpent lightning's winding track,
 She ran upon the platforms of the wind,
 And laughed to hear the fire-balls roar behind.

LVI.

And sometimes to those streams of upper air
 Which whirl the earth in its diurnal round,
 She would ascend, and win the spirits there
 To let her join their chorus. Mortals found
 That on those days the sky was calm and fair,
 And mystic snatches of harmonious sound
 Wandered upon the earth where'er she past,
 And happy thoughts of hope, too sweet to last.

LVII.

But her choice sport was, in the hours of sleep,
 To glide adown old Nilus, where he threads
 Egypt and Æthiopia, from the steep
 Of utmost Axumè, until he spreads,

Like a calm flock of silver-fleeced sheep,
His waters on the plain: and crested heads
Of cities and proud temples gleam amid,
And many a vapour-belted pyramid.

LVIII.

By Moëris and the Mareotid lakes,
Strewn with faint blooms like bridal chamber floors,
Where naked boys bridling tame water-snakes,
Or charioteering ghastly alligators,
Had left on the sweet waters mighty wakes
Of those huge forms—within the brazen doors
Of the great Labyrinth slept both boy and beast,
Tired with the pomp of their Osirian feast.

LIX.

And where within the surface of the river
The shadows of the massy temples lie,
And never are erased—but tremble ever
Like things which every cloud can doom to die,
Through lotus-paven canals, and wheresoever
The works of man pierced that serenest sky
With tombs, and towers, and fanes, 'twas her delight
To wander in the shadow of the night.

LX.

With motion like the spirit of that wind
Whose soft step deepens slumber, her light feet
Past through the peopled haunts of human kind,
Scattering sweet visions from her presence sweet,
Through fane, and palace-court, and labyrinth mined
With many a dark and subterranean street
Under the Nile, through chambers high and deep
She past, observing mortals in their sleep.

LXI.

A pleasure sweet doubtless it was to see
Mortals subdued in all the shapes of sleep.
Here lay two sister twins in infancy;
There, a lone youth who in his dreams did weep;
Within, two lovers linked innocently
In their loose locks which over both did creep

Like ivy from one stem;—and there lay calm
Old age with snow-bright hair and folded palm.

LXII.

But other troubled forms of sleep she saw,
Not to be mirrored in a holy song—
Distortions foul of supernatural awe,
And pale imaginings of visioned wrong;
And all the code of custom's lawless law
Written upon the brows of old and young:
"This," said the wizard maiden, "is the strife
Which stirs the liquid surface of man's life."

LXIII.

And little did the sight disturb her soul.—
We, the weak mariners of that wide lake
Where'er its shores extend or billows roll,
Our course unpiloted and starless make
O'er its wild surface to an unknown goal:—
But she in the calm depths her way could take,
Where in bright bowers immortal forms abide
Beneath the weltering of the restless tide.

LXIV.

And she saw princes couched under the glow
Of sunlike gems; and round each temple-court
In dormitories ranged, row after row,
She saw the priests asleep—all of one sort—
For all were educated to be so.—
The peasants in their huts, and in the port
The sailors she saw cradled on the waves,
And the dead lulled within their dreamless graves.

LXV.

And all the forms in which those spirits lay
Were to her sight like the diaphanous
Veils, in which those sweet ladies oft array
Their delicate limbs, who would conceal from us
Only their scorn of all concealment: they
Move in the light of their own beauty thus.
But these and all now lay with sleep upon them,
And little thought a Witch was looking on them.

LXVI.

She, all those human figures breathing there,
Beheld as living spirits—to her eyes
The naked beauty of the soul lay bare,
And often through a rude and worn disguise
She saw the inner form most bright and fair—
And then she had a charm of strange device,
Which, murmured on mute lips with tender tone,
Could make that spirit mingle with her own.

LXVII.

Alas! Aurora, what wouldst thou have given
For such a charm when Tithon became grey?
Or how much, Venus, of thy silver Heaven
Wouldst thou have yielded, ere Proserpina
Had half (oh! why not all?) the debt forgiven
Which dear Adonis had been doomed to pay,
To any witch who would have taught you it?
The Heliad doth not know its value yet.

LXVIII.

'Tis said in after times her spirit free
Knew what love was, and felt itself alone—
But holy Dian could not chaster be
Before she stooped to kiss Endymion,
Than now this lady—like a sexless bee
Tasting all blossoms, and confined to none,
Among those mortal forms, the wizard-maiden
Past with an eye serene and heart unladen.

LXIX.

To those she saw most beautiful, she gave
Strange panacea in a crystal bowl:—
They drank in their deep sleep of that sweet wave,
And lived thenceforward as if some controul,
Mightier than life, were in them; and the grave
Of such, when death oppressed the weary soul,
Was as a green and overarching bower
Lit by the gems of many a starry flower.

LXX.

For on the night when they were buried, she
Restored the embalmers' ruining, and shook

The light out of the funeral lamps, to be
A mimic day within that deathly nook;
And she unwound the woven imagery
Of second childhood's swaddling bands, and took
The coffin, its last cradle, from its niche,
And threw it with contempt into a ditch.

LXXI.

And there the body lay, age after age,
Mute, breathing, beating, warm and undecaying,
Like one asleep in a green hermitage,
With gentle smiles about its eyelids playing,
And living in its dreams beyond the rage
Of death or life; while they were still arraying
In liveries ever new, the rapid, blind
And fleeting generations of mankind.

LXXII.

And she would write strange dreams upon the brain
Of those who were less beautiful, and make
All harsh and crooked purposes more vain
Than in the desert is the serpent's wake
Which the sand covers,—all his evil gain
The miser in such dreams would rise and shake
Into a beggar's lap;—the lying scribe
Would his own lies betray without a bribe.

LXXIII.

The priests would write an explanation full,
Translating hieroglyphics into Greek,
How the god Apis really was a bull,
And nothing more; and bid the herald stick
The same against the temple doors, and pull
The old cant down; they licensed all to speak
Whate'er they thought of hawks, and cats, and geese,
By pastoral letters to each diocese.

LXXIV.

The king would dress an ape up in his crown
And robes, and seat him on his glorious seat,
And on the right hand of the sunlike throne
Would place a gaudy mock-bird to repeat

The chatterings of the monkey.—Every one

Of the prone courtiers crawled to kiss the feet
Of their great Emperor, when the morning came,
And kissed—alas, how many kiss the same!

LXXV.

The soldiers dreamed that they were blacksmiths, and

Walked out of quarters in somnambulism;
Round the red anvils you might see them stand

Like Cyclopes in Vulcan's sooty abysm,
Beating their swords to ploughshares;—in a band

The gaolers sent those of the liberal schism
Free through the streets of Memphis, much, I wis
To the annoyance of king Amasis.

LXXVI.

And timid lovers who had been so coy,

They hardly knew whether they loved or not,
Would rise out of their rest, and take sweet joy,

To the fulfilment of their inmost thought;
And when next day the maiden and the boy

Met one another, both, like sinners caught,
Blushed at the thing which each believed was done
Only in fancy—till the tenth moon shone;

LXXVII.

And then the Witch would let them take no ill:

Of many thousand schemes which lovers find,
The Witch found one,—and so they took their fill

Of happiness in marriage warm and kind.
Friends who, by practice of some envious skill,

Were torn apart, a wide wound, mind from mind!
She did unite again with visions clear
Of deep affection and of truth sincere.

LXXVIII.

These were the pranks she played among the cities

Of mortal men, and what she did to sprites
And Gods, entangling them in her sweet ditties

To do her will, and show their subtle slights,
I will declare another time; for it is

A tale more fit for the weird winter nights,
Than for these garish summer days, when we
Scarcely believe much more than we can see.

FRAGMENTS OF AN UNFINISHED DRAMA.

SCENE, BEFORE THE CAVERN OF THE INDIAN ENCHANTRESS.
THE ENCHANTRESS COMES FORTH.

ENCHANTRESS.

He came like a dream in the dawn of life,
He fled like a shadow before its noon;
He is gone, and my peace is turned to strife,
And I wander and wane like the weary moon.

O sweet Echo, wake,

5

And for my sake

Make answer the while my heart shall break!

But my heart has a music which Echo's lips,
Though tender and true, yet can answer not,
And the shadow that moves in the soul's eclipse
Can return not the kiss by his now forgot;

10

Sweet lips! he who hath

On my desolate path

Cast the darkness of absence, worse than death!

The ENCHANTRESS makes her spell: she is answered by a Spirit.

SPIRIT.

Within the silent centre of the earth
My mansion is; where I have lived insphered
From the beginning, and around my sleep
Have woven all the wondrous imagery
Of this dim spot, which mortals call the world;
Infinite depths of unknown elements

15

Massed into one impenetrable mask;

20

Sheets of immeasurable fire, and veins

Of gold and stone, and adamantine iron.

And as a veil in which I walk through Heaven

I have wrought mountains, seas, and waves, and clouds,

And lastly light, whose interfusion dawns

26

In the dark space of interstellar air.

[ANOTHER SCENE.]

INDIAN YOUTH AND LADY.

INDIAN.

And, if my grief should still be dearer to me
Than all the pleasures in the world beside,
Why would you lighten it?—

LADY.

I offer only
That which I seek, some human sympathy
In this mysterious island.

30

INDIAN.

Oh! my friend,
My sister, my beloved!—What do I say?
My brain is dizzy, and I scarce know whether
I speak to thee or her.

LADY.

Peace, perturbed heart!
I am to thee only as thou to mine,
The passing wind which heals the brow at noon,
And may strike cold into the breast at night,
Yet cannot linger where it soothes the most,
Or long soothe could it linger.

35

INDIAN.

But you said
You also loved?

40

LADY.

Loved! Oh, I love. Methinks
This word of love is fit for all the world,
And that for gentle hearts another name
Would speak of gentler thoughts than the world owns.
I have loved.

INDIAN.

And thou lovest not? if so
Young as thou art thou canst afford to weep.

45

LADY.

Oh! would that I could claim exemption
From all the bitterness of that sweet name.
I loved, I love, and when I love no more

Let joys and grief perish, and leave despair 50
To ring the knell of youth. He stood beside me,
The embodied vision of the brightest dream,
Which like a dawn heralds the day of life;
The shadow of his presence made my world
A paradise. All familiar things he touched, 55
All common words he spoke, became to me
Like forms and sounds of a diviner world.
He was as is the sun in his fierce youth,
As terrible and lovely as a tempest;
He came, and went, and left me what I am. 60
Alas! Why must I think how oft we two
Have sate together near the river springs,
Under the green pavilion which the willow
Spreads on the floor of the unbroken fountain,
Strewn by the nurslings that linger there? 65
Over that islet paved with flowers and moss,
While the musk-rose leaves, like flakes of crimson snow,
Showered on us, and the dove mourned in the pine,
Sad prophetess of sorrows not her own,
The crane returned to her unfrozen haunt, 70
And the false cuckoo bade the Spring good morn;
And on a wintry bough the widowed bird,
Hid in the deepest night of ivy-leaves,
Renewed the vigils of a sleepless sorrow.
I, left like her, and leaving one like her, 75
Alike abandoned and abandoning
(Oh! unlike her in this!) the gentlest youth,
Whose love had made my sorrows dear to him,
Even as my sorrow made his love to me!

INDIAN.

One curse of Nature stamps in the same mould 80
The features of the wretched; and they are
As like as violet to violet,
When memory, the ghost, their odours keeps
'Mid the cold relics of abandoned joy.—
Proceed.

LADY.

He was a simple innocent boy. 85
I loved him well, but not as he desired;

Yet even thus he was content to be:—

A short content, for I was . . .

INDIAN [*Aside*].

God of heaven!

From such an islet, such a river-spring . . .!

I dare not ask her if there stood upon it 90

A pleasure-dome surmounted by a crescent,

With steps to the blue water. [*Aloud*] It may be

That Nature masks in life several copies

Of the same lot, so that the sufferers

May feel another's sorrow as their own, 95

And find in friendship what they lost in love.

That cannot be: yet it is strange that we,

From the same scene, by the same path to this

Realm of abandonment . . . But speak! your breath—

Your breath is like soft music, your words are 100

The echoes of a voice which on my heart

Sleeps like a melody of early days.

But as you said—

LADY.

He was so awful, yet

So beautiful in mystery and terror,

Calming me as the loveliness of heaven 105

Soothes the unquiet sea:—and yet not so,

For he seemed stormy, and would often seem

A quenchless sun masked in portentous clouds;

For such his thoughts, and even his actions were;

But he was not of them, nor they of him, 110

But as they hid his splendour from the earth.

Some said he was a man of blood and peril,

And steeped in bitter infamy to the lips.

More need was there I should be innocent,

More need that I should be most true and kind, 115

And much more need that there should be found one

To share remorse, and scorn and solitude,

And all the ills that wait on those who do

The tasks of ruin in the world of life.

He fled, and I have followed him.

INDIAN.

Such a one

120

Is he who was the winter of my peace.
But, fairest stranger, when didst thou depart
From the far hills where rise the springs of India,
How didst thou pass the intervening sea?

LADY.

If I be sure I am not dreaming now, 123
I should not doubt to say it was a dream.
Methought a star came down from heaven,
And rested 'mid the plants of India,
Which I had given a shelter from the frost
Within my chamber. There the meteor lay, 130
Panting forth light among the leaves and flowers,
As if it lived, and was outworn with speed;
Or that it loved, and passion made the pulse
Of its bright life throb like an anxious heart,
Till it diffused itself, and all the chamber 135
And walls seemed melted into emerald fire
That burned not; in the midst of which appeared
A spirit like a child, and laughed aloud
A thrilling peal of such sweet merriment
As made the blood tingle in my warm feet: 140
Then bent over a vase, and murmuring
Low, unintelligible melodies,
Placed something in the mould like melon-seeds,
And slowly faded, and in place of it
A soft hand issued from the veil of fire, 145
Holding a cup like a magnolia flower,
And poured upon the earth within the vase
The element with which it overflowed,
Brighter than morning light, and purer than
The water of the springs of Himalah. 150

INDIAN.

You waked not?

LADY.

Not until my dream became
Like a child's legend on the tideless sand,
Which the first foam erases half, and half
Leaves legible. At length I rose, and went,
Visiting my flowers from pot to pot, and thought 155

To set new cuttings in the empty urns,
And when I came to that beside the lattice,
I saw two little dark-green leaves
Lifting the light mould at their birth, and then
I half-remembered my forgotten dream. 160
And day by day, green as a gourd in June,
The plant grew fresh and thick, yet no one knew
What plant it was; its stem and tendrils seemed
Like emerald snakes, mottled and diamonded
With azure mail and streaks of woven silver; 165
And all the sheaths that folded the dark buds
Rose like the crest of cobra-di-capel,
Until the golden eye of the bright flower,
Through the dark lashes of those veined lids,
Disencumbered of their silent sleep, 170
Gazed like a star into the morning light.
Its leaves were delicate, you almost saw
The pulses
With which the purple velvet flower was fed
To overflow, and like a poet's heart 175
Changing bright fancy to sweet sentiment,
Changed half the light to fragrance. It soon fell,
And to a green and dewy embryo-fruit
Left all its treasured beauty. Day by day
I nursed the plant, and on the double flute 180
Played to it on the sunny winter days
Soft melodies, as sweet as April rain
On silent leaves, and sang those words in which
Passion makes Echo taunt the sleeping strings;
And I would send tales of forgotten love 185
Late into the lone night, and sing wild songs
Of maids deserted in the olden time,
And weep like a soft cloud in April's bosom
Upon the sleeping eyelids of the plant,
So that perhaps it dreamed that Spring was come, 190
And crept abroad into the moonlight air,
And loosened all its limbs, as, noon by noon,
The sun averted less his oblique beam.

INDIAN.

And the plant died not in the frost?

LADY.

It grew ;
And went out of the lattice which I left 195
Half open for it, trailing its quaint spires
Along the garden and across the lawn,
And down the slope of moss and through the tufts
Of wild-flower roots, and stumps of trees o'ergrown
With simple lichens, and old hoary stones, 200
On to the margin of the glassy pool,
Even to a nook of unblown violets
And lilies-of-the-valley yet unborn,
Under a pine with ivy overgrown.
And there its fruit lay like a sleeping lizard 205
Under the shadows ; but when Spring indeed
Came to unswathe her infants, and the lilies
Peeped from their bright green masks to wonder at
This shape of autumn couched in their recess,
Then it dilated, and it grew until 210
One half lay floating on the fountain wave,
Whose pulse, elapsed in unlike sympathies,
Kept time
Among the snowy water-lily buds.
Its shape was such as summer melody 215
Of the south wind in spicy vales might give
To some light cloud bound from the golden dawn
To fairy isles of evening, and it seemed
In hue and form that it had been a mirror
Of all the hues and forms around it and 220
Upon it pictured by the sunny beams
Which, from the bright vibrations of the pool,
Were thrown upon the rafters and the roof
Of boughs and leaves, and on the pillared stems
Of the dark sylvan temple, and reflections 225
Of every infant flower and star of moss
And veined leaf in the azure odorous air.
And thus it lay in the Elysian calm
Of its own beauty, floating on the line
Which, like a film in purest space, divided 230
The heaven beneath the water from the heaven
Above the clouds ; and every day I went

Watching its growth and wondering;
 And as the day grew hot, methought I saw
 A glassy vapour dancing on the pool, 235
 And on it little quaint and filmy shapes,
 With dizzy motion, wheel and rise and fall,
 Like clouds of gnats with perfect lineaments.

* * * * *

O friend, sleep was a veil uplift from heaven—
 As if heaven dawned upon the world of dream— 240
 When darkness rose on the extinguished day
 Out of the eastern wilderness.

INDIAN.

I too

Have found a moment's paradise in sleep
 Half compensate a hell of waking sorrow.

CHARLES THE FIRST.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING CHARLES I.
 QUEEN HENRIETTA.
 LAUD, Archbishop of Canterbury.
 WENTWORTH, Earl of Strafford.
 LORD COTTINGTON.
 LORD WESTON.
 LORD COVENTRY.
 WILLIAMS, Bishop of Lincoln.
 Secretary LYTTTELTON.
 JUXON.

ST. JOHN.
 ARCHY, the Court Fool.
 HAMPDEN.
 PYM.
 CROMWELL.
 CROMWELL'S DAUGHTER.
 SIR HARRY VANE the younger.
 LEIGHTON.
 BASTWICK.
 PRYNNE.

Gentlemen of the Inns of Court, Citizens, Pursuivants, Marshalsmen,
 Law Students, Judges, Clerk.

SCENE I.

THE MASK OF THE INNS OF COURT.

A PURSUIVANT.

Place, for the Marshal of the Mask!

FIRST CITIZEN.

What thinkest thou of this quaint mask which turns,

Like morning from the shadow of the night,
The night to day, and London to a place
Of peace and joy?

SECOND CITIZEN.

And Hell to Heaven.

5

Eight years are gone,
And they seem hours, since in this populous street
I trod on grass made green by summer's rain,
For the red plague kept state within that palace
Where now reigns vanity—in nine years more
The roots will be refreshed with civil blood;
And thank the mercy of insulted Heaven
That sin and wrongs wound as an orphan's cry,
The patience of the great avenger's ear.

10

A YOUTH.

Yet, father, 'tis a happy sight to see,
Beautiful, innocent, and unforbidden
By God or man;—'tis like the bright procession
Of skiey visions in a solemn dream
From which men wake as from a paradise,
And draw new strength to tread the thorns of life.
If God be good, wherefore should this be evil?
And if this be not evil, dost thou not draw
Unseasonable poison from the flowers
Which bloom so rarely in this barren world?
O, kill these bitter thoughts which make the present
Dark as the future!—

15

20

26

* * * * *

When Avarice and Tyranny, vigilant Fear,
And open-eyed Conspiracy lie sleeping
As on Hell's threshold; and all gentle thoughts
Waken to worship him who giveth joys
With his own gift.

30

SECOND CITIZEN.

How young art thou in this old age of time!
How green in this grey world! Canst thou discern
The signs of seasons, yet perceive no hint
Of change in that stage-scene in which thou art
Not a spectator but an actor? or

35

Art thou a puppet moved by [engineering]?
The day that dawns in fire will die in storms,
Even though the noon be calm. My travel's done,—
Before the whirlwind wakes I shall have found
My inn of lasting rest; but thou must still
Be journeying on in this inclement air.
Wrap thy old cloak about thy back;
Nor leave the broad and plain and beaten road,
Although no flowers smile on the trodden dust,
For the violet paths of pleasure. This Charles the First
Rose like the equinoctial sun, . . .
By vapours, through whose threatening ominous veil
Darting his altered influence he has gained
This height of noon—from which he must decline
Amid the darkness of conflicting storms,
To dank extinction and to latest night. . .
There goes the apostate Strafford; he whose titles. . .
 whispered aphorisms
From Machiavel and Bacon: and, if Judas
Had been as brazen and as bold as he. . .

FIRST CITIZEN.

That is the Archbishop.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Rather say the Pope:
London will be soon his Rome: he walks
As if he trod upon the heads of men.
He looks elate, drunken with blood and gold;—
Beside him moves the Babylonian woman
Invisibly, and with her as with his shadow,
Mitred adulterer! he is joined in sin,
Which turns Heaven's milk of mercy to revenge.

THIRD CITIZEN (*lifting up his eyes*).

Good Lord! rain it down upon him! . . . 65
Amid her ladies walks the papist queen,
As if her nice feet scorned our English earth.
The Canaanitish Jezebel! I would be
A dog if I might tear her with my teeth!
There's old Sir Henry Vane, the Earl of Pembroke, 70
Lord Essex, and Lord Keeper Coventry,
And others who make base their English breed

By vile participation of their honours
With papists, atheists, tyrants, and apostates.
When lawyers mask 'tis time for honest men 75
To strip the vizor from their purposes.
A seasonable time for maskers this!
When Englishmen and Protestants should sit
dust on their dishonoured heads,
To avert the wrath of him whose scourge is felt 80
For the great sins which have drawn down from Heaven
and foreign overthrow.
The remnant of the martyred saints in Rochefort
Have been abandoned by their faithless allies
To that idolatrous and adulterous torturer 85
Lewis of France,—the Palatinate is lost. . .

*Enter LEIGHTON (who has been branded in the face) and
BASTWICK.*

Canst thou be—art thou. . . ?

LEIGHTON.

I *was* Leighton: what
I *am* thou seest. And yet turn thine eyes,
And with thy memory look on thy friend's mind,
Which is unchanged, and where is written deep 90
The sentence of my judge.

THIRD CITIZEN.

Are these the marks with which
Laud thinks to improve the image of his Maker
Stamped on the face of man? Curses upon him,
The impious tyrant!

SECOND CITIZEN.

It is said besides
That lewd and papist drunkards may profane 95
The Sabbath with their. . .
And has permitted that most heathenish custom
Of dancing round a pole dressed up with wreaths
On May-day.
A man who thus twice crucifies his God 100
May well his brother.—In my mind, friend,
The root of all this ill is prelacy.
I would cut up the root.

THIRD CITIZEN.

And by what means?

SECOND CITIZEN.

Smiting each Bishop under the fifth rib.

THIRD CITIZEN.

You seem to know the vulnerable place 105
Of these same crocodiles.

SECOND CITIZEN.

I learnt it in

Egyptian bondages, sir. Your worm of Nile
Betrays not with its flattering tears like they;
For, when they cannot kill, they whine and weep.
Nor is it half so greedy of men's bodies 110
As they of soul and all; nor does it wallow
In slime as they in simony and lies
And close lusts of the flesh.

A MARSHALSMAN.

Give place, give place!

You torch-bearers, advance to the great gate,
And then attend the Marshal of the Mask 115
Into the Royal presence.

A LAW STUDENT.

What thinkest thou

Of this quaint show of ours, my aged friend?
Even now we see the redness of the torches
Inflame the night to the eastward, and the clarions
Gasp to us on the wind's wave. It comes! 120
And their sounds, floating hither round the pageant,
Rouse up the astonished air.

FIRST CITIZEN.

I will not think but that our country's wounds
May yet be healed—The king is just and gracious,
Though wicked counsels now pervert his will: 125
These once cast off—

SECOND CITIZEN.

As adders cast their skins

And keep their venom, so kings often change;
Councils and counsellors hang on one another,
Hiding the loathsome. . . ,

Like the base patchwork of a leper's rags. 130

THE YOUTH.

O, still those dissonant thoughts!—List how the music
Grows on the enchanted air! And see, the torches
Restlessly flashing, and the crowd divided
Like waves before an admiral's prow!

A MARSHALSMAN.

Give place

To the Marshal of the Mask!

A PURSUIVANT.

Room for the King! 135

THE YOUTH.

How glorious! See those thronging chariots
Rolling, like painted clouds before the wind,
Behind their solemn steeds: how some are shaped
Like curvèd shells dyed by the azure depths
Of Indian seas; some like the new-born moon; 140
And some like cars in which the Romans climbed
(Canopied by Victory's eagle wings outspread)
The Capitolian—See how gloriously
The mettled horses in the torchlight stir
Their gallant riders, while they check their pride, 145
Like shapes of some diviner element
Than English air, and beings nobler than
The envious and admiring multitude.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Aye, there they are—
Nobles, and sons of nobles, patentees, 150
Monopolists, and stewards of this poor farm,
On whose lean sheep sit the prophetic crows.
Here is the pomp that strips the houseless orphan,
Here is the pride that breaks the desolate heart.
These are the lilies glorious as Solomon, 155
Who toil not, neither do they spin,—unless
It be the webs they catch poor rogues withal.
Here is the surfeit which to them who earn
The niggard wages of the earth, scarce leaves
The tithe that will support them till they crawl 160
Back to her cold hard bosom. Here is health

Followed by grim disease, glory by shame,
 Waste by lame famine, wealth by squalid want,
 And England's sin by England's punishment.
 And, as the effect pursues the cause foregone, 165
 Lo, giving substance to my words, behold
 At once the sign and the thing signified—
 A troop of cripples, beggars, and lean outcasts,
 Horsed upon stumbling jades, carted with dung,
 Dragged for a day from cellars and low cabins 170
 And rotten hiding-holes, to point the moral
 Of this presentment, and bring up the rear
 Of painted pomp with misery!

THE YOUTH.

'Tis but
 The anti-mask, and serves as discords do
 In sweetest music. Who would love May flowers 175
 If they succeeded not to Winter's flaw;
 Or day unchanged by night; or joy itself
 Without the touch of sorrow?

SECOND CITIZEN.

I and thou . . .

A MARSHALSMAN.

Place, give place!

SCENE II.

A CHAMBER IN WHITEHALL. ENTER THE KING, QUEEN, LAUD,
 LORD STRAFFORD, LORD COTTINGTON, AND OTHER LORDS;
 ARCHY; ALSO ST. JOHN, WITH SOME GENTLEMEN OF THE INNS OF
 COURT.

KING.

Thanks, gentlemen. I heartily accept
 This token of your service: your gay mask
 Was performed gallantly. And it shows well
 When subjects twine such flowers of observance
 With the sharp thorns that deck the English crown. 5
 A gentle heart enjoys what it confers,
 Even as it suffers that which it inflicts,
 Though Justice guides the stroke.
 Accept my hearty thanks.

QUEEN.

And, gentlemen, 9
Call your poor Queen your debtor. Your quaint pageant
Rose on me like the figures of past years,
Treading their still path back to infancy,
More beautiful and mild as they draw nearer
The quiet cradle. I could have almost wept
To think I was in Paris, where these shows 15
Are well devised—such as I was ere yet
My young heart shared a portion of the burthen,
The careful weight, of this great monarchy.
There, gentlemen, between the sovereign's pleasure
And that which it regards, no clamour lifts 20
Its proud interposition.
In Paris ribald censors dare not move
Their poisonous tongues against these sinless sports;
And *his* smile
Warms those who bask in it, as ours would do 25
If . . . Take my heart's thanks: add them, gentlemen,
To those good words which, were he King of France,
My royal lord would turn to golden deeds.

ST JOHN.

Madam, the love of Englishmen can make
The lightest favour of their lawful king 30
Outweigh a despot's.—We humbly take our leaves,
Enriched by smiles which France can never buy.
[*Exeunt ST JOHN and the Gentlemen of the Inns of Court.*

KING.

My Lord Archbishop,
Mark you what spirit sits in St John's eyes?
Methinks it is too saucy for this presence. 35

ARCHY.

Yes, pray your Grace look: for, like an unsophisticated
. . . sees everything upside down, you who are wise will
discern the shadow of an idiot in lawn sleeves and a rochet
setting springes to catch woodcocks in haymaking time.
Poor Archy, whose owl-eyes are tempered to the error of
his age, and because he is a fool, and by special ordinance
of God forbidden ever to see himself as he is, sees now in
that deep eye a blindfold devil sitting on the ball, and

weighing words out between king and subjects. One scale is full of promises, and the other full of protestations: and then another devil creeps behind the first out of the dark windings [of a] pregnant lawyer's brain, and takes the bandage from the other's eyes, and throws a sword into the left-hand scale, for all the world like my Lord Essex's there.

STRAFFORD.

A rod in pickle for the Fool's back!

50

ARCHY.

Aye, and some are now smiling whose tears will make the brine; for the Fool sees...

STRAFFORD.

Insolent! You shall have your coat turned and be whipped out of the palace for this.

ARCHY.

When all the fools are whipped, and all the protestant writers, while the knaves are whipping the fools ever since a thief was set to catch a thief. If all turncoats were whipped out of palaces, poor Archy would be disgraced in good company. Let the knaves whip the fools, and all the fools laugh at it. [Let the] wise and goodly slit each other's noses and ears (having no need of any sense of discernment in their craft); and the knaves, to marshal them, join in a procession to Bedlam, to entreat the madmen to omit their sublime Platonic contemplations, and manage the state of England. Let all the honest men who lie pinched up at the prisons or the pillories, in custody of the pursuivants of the High-Commission Court, marshal them.

67

Enter Secretary LYTTTELTON, with papers.

KING (*looking over the papers*).

These stiff Scots

His Grace of Canterbury must take order
To force under the Church's yoke.—You, Wentworth,
Shall be myself in Ireland, and shall add
Your wisdom, gentleness, and energy,
To what in me were wanting.—My Lord Weston,
Look that those merchants draw not without loss
Their bullion from the Tower; and, on the payment
Of shipmoney, take fullest compensation

71

76

For violation of our royal forests,
 Whose limits, from neglect, have been o'ergrown
 With cottages and cornfields. The uttermost
 Farthing exact from those who claim exemption 80
 From knighthood: that which once was a reward
 Shall thus be made a punishment, that subjects
 May know how majesty can wear at will
 The rugged mood.—My Lord of Coventry,
 Lay my command upon the Courts below 85
 That bail be not accepted for the prisoners
 Under the warrant of the Star Chamber.
 The people shall not find the stubbornness
 Of Parliament a cheap or easy method
 Of dealing with their rightful sovereign: 90
 And doubt not this, my Lord of Coventry,
 We will find time and place for fit rebuke.—
 My Lord of Canterbury.

ARCHY.

The fool is here.

LAUD.

I crave permission of your Majesty
 To order that this insolent fellow be 95
 Chastised: he mocks the sacred character,
 Scoffs at the state, and—

KING.

What, my Archy?

He mocks and mimics all he sees and hears,
 Yet with a quaint and graceful license—Prithee
 For this once do not as Prynne would, were he 100
 Primate of England. With your Grace's leave,
 He lives in his own world; and, like a parrot
 Hung in his gilded prison from the window
 Of a queen's bower over the public way,
 Blasphemes with a bird's mind:—his words, like arrows 106
 Which know no aim beyond the archer's wit,
 Strike sometimes what eludes philosophy.—
 [*To Archy*] Go, sirrah, and repent of your offence
 Ten minutes in the rain: be it your penance
 To bring news how the world goes there. [*Exit ARCHY.*
 Poor Archy! 110

He weaves about himself a world of mirth
Out of the wreck of ours.

LAUD.

I take with patience, as my Master did,
All scoffs permitted from above.

KING.

My lord,
Pray overlook these papers. Archy's words 115
Had wings, but these have talons.

QUEEN.

And the lion
That wears them must be tamed. My dearest lord,
I see the new-born courage in your eye
Armed to strike dead the spirit of the time,
Which spurs to rage the many-headed beast. 120
Do thou persist: for, faint but in resolve,
And it were better thou hadst still remained
The slave of thine own slaves, who tear like curs
The fugitive, and flee from the pursuer;
And Opportunity, that empty wolf, 125
Flies at his throat who falls. Subdue thy actions
Even to the disposition of thy purpose,
And be that tempered as the Ebro's steel;
And banish weak-eyed Mercy to the weak,
Whence she will greet thee with a gift of peace, 130
And not betray thee with a traitor's kiss,
As when she keeps the company of rebels,
Who think that she is Fear. This do, lest we
Should fall as from a glorious pinnacle
In a bright dream, and wake as from a dream 135
Out of our worshipped state.

KING.

Belovèd friend,
God is my witness that this weight of power,
Which he sets me my earthly task to wield
Under his law, is my delight and pride
Only because thou lovest that and me. 140
For a king bears the office of a God
To all the under world; and to his God
Alone he must deliver up his trust,

Unshorn of its permitted attributes.
[It seems] now as the baser elements 145
Had mutinied against the golden sun
That kindles them to harmony, and quells
Their self-destroying rapine. The wild million
Strike at the eye that guides them; like as humours
Of the distempered body that conspire 150
Against the spirit of life throned in the heart,—
And thus become the prey of one another,
And last of death. . . .

STRAFFORD.

That which would be ambition in a subject
Is duty in a sovereign; for on him, 155
As on a keystone, hangs the arch of life,
Whose safety is its strength. Degree and form,
And all that makes the age of reasoning man
More memorable than a beast's, depend on this—
That Right should fence itself inviolably 160
With power; in which respect the state of England
From usurpation by the insolent commons
Cries for reform.
Get treason, and spare treasure. Fee with coin
The loudest murmurers; feed with jealousies 165
Opposing factions,—be thyself of none;
And borrow gold of many, for those who lend
Will serve thee till thou payest them; and thus
Keep the fierce spirit of the hour at bay,
Till time, and its coming generations 170
Of nights and days unborn, bring some one chance,

* * * * *

Or war or pestilence or Nature's self,
By some distemperature or terrible sign,
Be as an arbiter betwixt themselves.

Nor let your Majesty 175
Doubt here the peril of the unseen event.
How did your brother kings, coheritors
In your high interest in the subject earth,
Rise past such troubles to that height of power
Where now they sit, and awfully serene 180
Smile on the trembling world? Such popular storms

Philip the second of Spain, this Lewis of France,
 And late the German head of many bodies,
 And every petty lord of Italy,
 Quelled or by arts or arms. Is England poorer 185
 Or feeblèr? or art thou who wield'st her power
 Tamer than they? or shall this island be—
 [Girdled] by its inviolable waters—
 To the world present and the world to come
 Sole pattern of extinguished monarchy? 190
 Not if thou dost as I would have thee do.

KING.

Your words shall be my deeds:
 You speak the image of my thought. My friend
 (If kings can have a friend, I call thee so),
 Beyond the large commission which belongs 195
 Under the great seal of the realm, take this:
 And, for some obvious reasons, let there be
 No seal on it, except my kingly word
 And honour as I am a gentleman.
 Be—as thou art within my heart and mind— 200
 Another self, here and in Ireland:
 Do what thou judgest well, take amplest license,
 And stick not even at questionable means.
 Hear me, Wentworth. My word is as a wall
 Between thee and this world thine enemy— 205
 That hates thee, for thou lovest me.

STRAFFORD.

I own
 No friend but thee, no enemies but thine:
 Thy lightest thought is my eternal law.
 How weak, how short, is life to pay . .

KING.

Peace, peace! 210
 Thou ow'st me nothing yet.—

[To LAUD] My lord, what say
 Those papers?

LAUD.

Your Majesty has ever interposed,
 In lenity towards your native soil,
 Between the heavy vengeance of the Church

And Scotland. Mark the consequence of warming 215
This brood of northern vipers in your bosom.
The rabble, instructed no doubt
By Loudon, Lindsay, Hume, and false Argyll,
(For the waves never menace heaven until
Scourged by the wind's invisible tyranny) 220
Have in the very temple of the Lord
Done outrage to his chosen ministers.
They scorn the liturgy of the holy Church,
Refuse to obey her canons, and deny
The apostolic power with which the Spirit 225
Has filled its elect vessels, even from him
Who held the keys with power to loose and bind,
To him who now pleads in this royal presence.—
Let ampler powers and new instructions be
Sent to the High Commissioners in Scotland. 230
To death, imprisonment, and confiscation,
Add torture, add the ruin of the kindred
Of the offender, add the brand of infamy,
Add mutilation: and if this suffice not,
Unleash the sword and fire, and in their thirst 235
They may lick up that scum of schismatics.
I laugh at those weak rebels who, desiring
What we possess, still prate of christian peace,
As if those dreadful arbitrating messengers
Which play the part of God 'twixt right and wrong, 241
Should be let loose against the innocent sleep
Of templ'd cities and the smiling fields,
For some poor argument of policy
Which touches our own profit or our pride,
Where it indeed were christian charity 245
To turn the cheek even to the smiter's hand:
And, when our great Redeemer, when our God,
When he who gave, accepted, and retained,
Himself in propitiation of our sins,
Is scorn'd in his immediate ministry, 250
With hazard of the inestimable loss
Of all the truth and discipline which is
Salvation to the extremest generation
Of men innumerable, they talk of peace!

Such peace as Canaan found, let Scotland now : 255
 For, by that Christ who came to bring a sword,
 Not peace, upon the earth, and gave command
 To his disciples at the passover
 That each should sell his robe and buy a sword,—
 Once strip that minister of naked wrath, 260
 And it shall never sleep in peace again
 Till Scotland bend or break.

KING.

My Lord Archbishop,
 Do what thou wilt and what thou canst in this.
 Thy earthly even as thy heavenly King
 Gives thee large power in his unquiet realm. 265
 But we want money, and my mind misgives me
 That for so great an enterprise, as yet,
 We are unfurnished.

STRAFFORD.

Yet it may not long
 Rest on our wills.

COTTINGTON.

The expenses
 Of gathering shipmoney, and of distraining 270
 For every petty rate (for we encounter
 A desperate opposition inch by inch
 In every warehouse and on every farm),
 Have swallowed up the gross sum of the imposts;
 So that, though felt as a most grievous scourge 275
 Upon the land, they stand us in small stead
 As touches the receipt.

STRAFFORD.

'Tis a conclusion
 Most arithmetical: and thence you infer
 Perhaps the assembling of a parliament.
 Now, if a man should call his dearest enemies 280
 To sit in licensed judgment on his life,
 His Majesty might wisely take that course.

[*Aside to COTTINGTON*]

It is enough to expect from these lean imposts
 That they perform the office of a scourge,
 Without more profit. [*Aloud*] Fines and confiscations, 285

And a forced loan from the refractory city,
Will fill our coffers: and the golden love
Of loyal gentlemen and noble friends
For the worshipped father of our common country,
With contributions from the catholics, 293
Will make Rebellion pale in our excess.
Be these the expedients until time and wisdom
Shall frame a settled state of government.

LAUD.

And weak expedients they! Have we not drained
All, till the which seemed 295
A mine exhaustless?

STRAFFORD.

And the love which *is*,
If loyal hearts could turn their blood to gold.

LAUD.

Both now grow barren: and I speak it not
As loving parliaments, which, as they have been
In the right hand of bold bad mighty kings 300
The scourges of the bleeding Church, I hate.
Methinks they scarcely can deserve our fear.

STRAFFORD.

O my dear liege, take back the wealth thou gavest:
With that, take all I held, but as in trust
For thee, of mine inheritance: leave me but 305
This unprovided body for thy service,
And a mind dedicated to no care
Except thy safety:—but assemble not
A parliament. Hundreds will bring, like me,
Their fortunes, as they would their blood, before . . . 310

KING.

No! thou who judgest them art but one. Alas!
We should be too much out of love with heaven,
Did this vile world show many such as thee,
Thou perfect just and honourable man!
Never shall it be said that Charles of England 315
Stripped those he loved for fear of those he scorns;
Nor will he so much misbecome his throne
As to impoverish those who most adorn

And best defend it. That you urge, dear Strafford,
Inclines me rather . . .

QUEEN.

To a parliament?

320

Is this thy firmness? and thou wilt preside
Over a knot of censurers,
To the unswearing of thy best resolves,
And choose the worst, when the worst comes too soon?
Plight not the worst before the worst must come. 325
Oh wilt thou smile whilst our ribald foes,
Dressed in their own usurped authority,
Sharpen their tongues on Henrietta's fame?
It is enough! Thou lovest me no more! [*Weeps.*]

KING.

Oh Henrietta! [*They talk apart.*]

COTTINGTON [*to LAUD.*]

Money we have none:

330

And all the expedients of my Lord of Strafford
Will scarcely meet the arrears.

LAUD.

Without delay

An army must be sent into the north;
Followed by a Commission of the Church,
With amplest power to quench in fire and blood, 335
And tears and terror, and the pity of hell,
The intenser wrath of Heresy. God will give
Victory; and victory over Scotland give
The lion England tamed into our hands.
That will lend power, and power bring gold.

COTTINGTON.

Meanwhile

We must begin first where your Grace leaves off. 341
Gold must give power, or . . .

LAUD.

I am not averse

From the assembling of a parliament.
Strong actions and smooth words might teach them soon
The lesson to obey. And are they not 345
A bubble fashioned by the monarch's mouth,

The birth of one light breath? If they serve no purpose,
A word dissolves them.

STRAFFORD.

The engine of parliaments
Might be deferred until I can bring over
The Irish regiments: they will serve to assure 350
The issue of the war against the Scots.
And, this game won—which if lost, all is lost—
Gather these chosen leaders of the rebels,
And call them, if you will, a parliament.

KING.

Oh be our feet still tardy to shed blood, 355
Guilty though it may be! I would still spare
The stubborn country of my birth, and ward
From countenances which I loved in youth
The wrathful Church's lacerating hand.
[To LAUD] Have you o'erlooked the other articles? 360

[*Re-enter* ARCHY.]

LAUD.

Hazlerig, Hampden, Pym, young Harry Vane,
Cromwell, and other rebels of less note,
Intend to sail with the next favouring wind
For the Plantations.

ARCHY.

Where they think to found
A commonwealth like Gonzalo's in the play, 365
Gynæcoccenic and pantisocratic.

KING.

What's that, sirrah?

ARCHY.

New devil's politics.
Hell is the pattern of all commonwealths:
Lucifer was the first republican.
Will you hear Merlin's prophecy, how three posts 370
"In one brainless skull, when the whitethorn is full,
Shall sail round the world, and come back again:
Shall sail round the world in a brainless skull,
And come back again when the moon is at full:"—
When, in spite of the Church, 375
They will hear homilies of whatever length

Or form they please.

COTTINGTON.

So please your Majesty to sign this order
For their detention.

ARCHY.

If your Majesty were tormented night and day by fever, gout, rheumatism, and stone, and asthma, &c., and you found these diseases had secretly entered into a conspiracy to abandon you, should you think it necessary to lay an embargo on the port by which they meant to dispeople your unquiet kingdom of man?

385

KING.

If fear were made for kings, the Fool mocks wisely;
But in this case. . . [*writing*] Here, my lord, take the warrant,
And see it duly executed forthwith.—

388

That imp of malice and mockery shall be punished.

[*Exeunt all but KING, QUEEN, and ARCHY.*]

ARCHY.

Aye, I am the physician of whom Plato prophesied, who was to be accused by the confectioner before a jury of children, who found him guilty without waiting for the summing-up, and hanged him without benefit of clergy. Thus Baby Charles, and the Twelfth-night Queen of Hearts, and the overgrown schoolboy Cottington, and that little urchin Laud—who would reduce a verdict of “guilty, death,” by famine, if it were impregnable by composition—all impannelled against poor Archy for presenting them bitter physic the last day of the holidays.

QUEEN.

Is the rain over, sirrah?

KING.

When it rains

400

And the sun shines, 'twill rain again to-morrow:
And therefore never smile till you've done crying.

ARCHY.

But 'tis all over now: like the April anger of woman,
the gentle sky has wept itself serene.

404

QUEEN.

What news abroad? how looks the world this morning?

ARCHY.

Gloriously as a grave covered with virgin flowers. There's a rainbow in the sky. Let your Majesty look at it, for

“A rainbow in the morning
Is the shepherd's warning;”

and the flocks of which you are the pastor are scattered among the mountain-tops, where every drop of water is a flake of snow, and the breath of May pierces like a January blast.

413

KING.

The sheep have mistaken the wolf for their shepherd, my poor boy; and the shepherd, the wolves for their watchdogs.

QUEEN.

But the rainbow was a good sign, Archy: it says that the waters of the deluge are gone, and can return no more.

ARCHY.

Aye, the salt-water one: but that of tears and blood must yet come down, and that of fire follow, if there be any truth in lies.—The rainbow hung over the city with all its shops, . . and churches, from north to south, like a bridge of congregated lightning pieced by the masonry of heaven—like a balance in which the angel that distributes the coming hour was weighing that heavy one whose poise is now felt in the lightest hearts, before it bows the proudest heads under the meanest feet.

426

QUEEN.

Who taught you this trash, sirrah?

ARCHY.

A torn leaf out of an old book trampled in the dirt.—But for the rainbow. It moved as the sun moved, and . . until the top of the Tower . . of a cloud through its left-hand tip, and Lambeth Palace look as dark as a rock before the other. Methought I saw a crown figured upon one tip, and a mitre on the other. So, as I had heard treasures were found where the rainbow quenches its points upon the earth, I set off, and at the Tower——. But I shall not tell your Majesty what I found close to the closet-window on which the rainbow had glimmered.

436

KING.

Speak: I will make my Fool my conscience.

ARCHY.

Then conscience is a fool.—I saw there a cat caught in a rat-trap. I heard the rats squeak behind the wainscots: it seemed to me that the very mice were consulting on the manner of her death.

441

QUEEN.

Archy is shrewd and bitter.

ARCHY.

Like the season,
so blow the winds.—But at the other end of the rainbow, where the grey rain was tempered along the grass and leaves by a tender interfusion of violet and gold in the meadows beyond Lambeth, what think you that I found instead of a mitre?

442

443

KING.

Vane's wits perhaps.

ARCHY.

Something as vain. I saw
a gross vapour hovering in a stinking ditch over the carcass of a dead ass, some rotten rags, and broken dishes—the wrecks of what once administered to the stuffing-out and the ornament of a worm of worms. His Grace of Canterbury expects to enter the New Jerusalem some Palm Sunday in triumph on the ghost of this ass.

445

QUEEN.

Enough, enough! Go desire Lady Jane
She place my lute, together with the music
Mari received last week from Italy,
In my boudoir, and . .

[Exit ARCHY.]

KING.

I'll go in.

QUEEN.

My beloved lord,
Have you not noted that the Fool of late
Has lost his careless mirth, and that his words
Sound like the echoes of our saddest fears?
What can it mean? I should be loth to think
Some factious slave had tutored him.

460

KING.

Oh no!

He is but Occasion's pupil. Partly 'tis 465
That our minds piece the vacant intervals
Of his wild words with their own fashioning;
As in the imagery of summer clouds,
Or coals of the winter fire, idlers find
The perfect shadows of their teeming thoughts: 470
And partly, that the terrors of the time
Are sown by wandering Rumour in all spirits;
And in the lightest and the least, may best
Be seen the current of the coming wind.

QUEEN.

Your brain is overwrought with these deep thoughts.
Come, I will sing to you; let us go try 476
These airs from Italy; and, as we pass
The gallery, we'll decide where that Correggio
Shall hang—the Virgin Mother 479
With her child, born the King of heaven and earth,
Whose reign is men's salvation. And you shall see
A cradled miniature of yourself asleep,
Stamped on the heart by never-erring love;
Liker than any Vandyke ever made,
A pattern to the unborn age of thee, 485
Over whose sweet beauty I have wept for joy
A thousand times, and now should weep for sorrow,
Did I not think that after we were dead
Our fortunes would spring high in him, and that
The cares we waste upon our heavy crown 490
Would make it light and glorious as a wreath
Of heaven's beams for his dear innocent brow.

KING.

Dear Henrietta!

SCENE III.

THE STAR CHAMBER. LAUD, JUXON, STRAFFORD, AND OTHERS,
AS JUDGES. PRYNNE AS A PRISONER, AND THEN BASTWICK.

LAUD.

Bring forth the prisoner Bastwick: let the clerk
Recite his sentence,

CLERK.

"That he pay five thousand
Pounds to the king, lose both his ears, be branded
With red-hot iron on the cheek and forehead,
And be imprisoned within Lancaster Castle
During the pleasure of the Court."

5

LAUD.

Prisoner,
If you have aught to say wherefore this sentence
Should not be put into effect, now speak.

JUXON.

If you have aught to plead in mitigation,
Speak.

BASTWICK.

Thus, my lords. If, like the prelates, I
Were an invader of the royal power,
A public scorner of the word of God,
Profane, idolatrous, popish, superstitious,
Impious in heart and in tyrannic act,
Void of wit, honesty, and temperance;
If Satan were my lord, as theirs,—our God
Pattern of all I should avoid to do;
Were I an enemy of my God and King
And of good men, as ye are;—I should merit
Your fearful state and guilt prosperity,
Which, when ye wake from the last sleep, shall turn
To cowls and robes of everlasting fire.
But, as I am, I bid ye grudge me not
The only earthly favour ye can yield,
Or I think worth acceptance at your hands,—
Scorn, mutilation, and imprisonment.

10

15

20

25

Even as my Master did,
Until Heaven's kingdom shall descend on earth,
Or earth be like a shadow in the light
Of heaven absorbed—some few tumultuous years
Will pass, and leave no wreck of what opposes
His will whose will is power.

30

LAUD.

Officer, take the prisoner from the bar,
And be his tongue slit for his insolence.

34

BASTWICK.

While this hand holds a pen . . .

LAUD.

Be his hands . . .

JUXON.

Stop!

Forbear, my lord! The tongue, which now can speak

No terror, would interpret, being dumb,

Heaven's thunder to our harm; . . .

And hands, which now write only their own shame,

With bleeding stumps might sign our blood away. 40

LAUD.

Much more such "mercy" among men would be,

Did all the ministers of Heaven's revenge

Flinch thus from earthly retribution. I

Could suffer what I would inflict.

[*Exit BASTWICK guarded.*]

Bring up

The Lord Bishop of Lincoln.—

[*To Strafford*] Know you not

45

That, in distraining for ten thousand pounds

Upon his books and furniture at Lincoln,

Were found these scandalous and seditious letters

Sent from one Osbaldistone, who is fled?

I speak it not as touching this poor person;

50

But of the office which should make it holy,

Were it as vile as it was ever spotless.

Mark too, my lord, that this expression strikes

His Majesty, if I misinterpret not.

Enter BISHOP WILLIAMS guarded.

STRAFFORD.

'Twere politic and just that Williams taste

55

The bitter fruit of his connexion with

The schismatics. But you, my Lord Archbishop,

Who owed your first promotion to his favour,

Who grew beneath his smile—

LAUD.

Would therefore beg

The office of his judge from this High Court,— 60

That it shall seem, even as it is, that I,
 In my assumption of this sacred robe,
 Have put aside all worldly preference,
 All sense of all distinction of all persons,
 All thoughts but of the service of the Church.— 65
 Bishop of Lincoln!

WILLIAMS.

Peace, proud hierarch!
 I know my sentence, and I own it just.
 Thou wilt repay me less than I deserve,
 In stretching to the utmost

* * * * *

SCENE IV.

HAMPDEN, PYM, CROMWELL, his Daughter, and young
 SIR HARRY VANE.

HAMPDEN.

England, farewell! thou who hast been my cradle,
 Shalt never be my dungeon or my grave!
 I held what I inherited in thee,
 As pawn for that inheritance of freedom
 Which thou hast sold for thy despoiler's smile: 5
 How can I call thee England, or my country?—
 Does the wind hold?

VANE.

The vanes sit steady
 Upon the Abbey towers. The silver lightnings
 Of the evening star, spite of the city's smoke,
 Tell that the north wind reigns in the upper air. 10
 Mark too that flock of fleecy-wingèd clouds
 Sailing athwart St. Margaret's.

HAMPDEN.

Hail, fleet herald
 Of tempest! that rude pilot who shall guide
 Hearts free as his, to realms as pure as thee,
 Beyond the shot of tyranny, 15
 Beyond the webs of that swoln spider...
 Beyond the curses, calumnies, and lies

Of atheist priests! And thou
Fair star, whose beam lies on the wide Atlantic,
Athwart its zones of tempest and of calm, 20
Bright as the path to a beloved home,
Oh light us to the isles of the evening land!
Like floating Edens cradled in the glimmer
Of sunset, through the distant mist of years 24
Touched by departing hope, they gleam! lone regions,
Where power's poor dupes and victims yet have never
Propitiated the savage fear of kings
With purest blood of noblest hearts; whose dew
Is yet unstained with tears of those who wake
To weep each day the wrongs on which it dawns; 30
Whose sacred silent air owns yet no echo
Of formal blasphemies; nor impious rites
Wrest man's free worship, from the God who loves,
To the poor worm who envies us his love!
Receive, thou young of Paradise, 35
These exiles from the old and sinful world!

* * * * *

This glorious clime, this firmament, whose lights
Dart mitigated influence through their veil
Of pale blue atmosphere; whose tears keep green
The pavement of this moist all-feeding earth; 40
This vaporous horizon, whose dim round
Is bastioned by the circumfluous sea,
Repelling invasion from the sacred towers,
Presses upon me like a dungeon's grate,
A low dark roof, a damp and narrow wall. 45
The boundless universe
Becomes a cell too narrow for the soul
That owns no master; while the loathliest ward
Of this wide prison, England, is a nest
Of cradling peace built on the mountain tops,— 50
To which the eagle spirits of the free,
Which range through heaven and earth, and scorn the storm
Of time, and gaze upon the light of truth,
Return to brood on thoughts that cannot die
And cannot be repelled. 55
Like eaglets floating in the heaven of time,

They soar above their quarry, and shall stoop
Through palaces and temples thunderproof.

SCENE V.

ARCHY.

I'll go live under the ivy that overgrows the terrace,
and court the tears shed on its old roots (?), as the [wind ?]
plays the song of

"A widow bird sate mourning
Upon a wintry bough."

5

[Sings]

Heigho! the lark and the owl!

One flies the morning, and one lulls the night:—
Only the nightingale, poor fond soul,
Sings like the fool through darkness and light.

"A widow bird sate mourning for her love 10
Upon a wintry bough;
The frozen wind crept on above,
The freezing stream below.

There was no leaf upon the forest bare,
No flower upon the ground, 15
And little motion in the air
Except the mill-wheel's sound."

THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE.

SWIFT as a spirit hastening to his task
Of glory and of good, the Sun sprang forth
Rejoicing in his splendour, and the mask
Of darkness fell from the awakened Earth—
The smokeless altars of the mountain snows 5
Flamed above crimson clouds, and at the birth
Of light, the Ocean's orison arose,
To which the birds tempered their matin lay.
All flowers in field or forest which uncloze

Their trembling eyelids to the kiss of day, 10
Swinging their censers in the element,
With orient incense lit by the new ray

Burned slow and unconsumably, and sent
Their odorous sighs up to the smiling air;
And, in succession due, did continent, 15

Isle, ocean, and all things that in them wear
The form and character of mortal mould,
Rise as the Sun their father rose, to bear

Their portion of the toil, which he of old
Took as his own, and then imposed on them: 20
But I, whom thoughts which must remain untold

Had kept as wakeful as the stars that gem
The cone of night, now they were laid asleep
Stretched my faint limbs beneath the hoary stem

Which an old chesnut flung athwart the steep 25
Of a green Apennine: before me fled
The night; behind me rose the day; the deep

Was at my feet, and Heaven above my head,
When a strange trance over my fancy grew
Which was not slumber, for the shade it spread 30

Was so transparent, that the scene came through
As clear as when a veil of light is drawn
O'er evening hills they glimmer; and I knew

That I had felt the freshness of that dawn,
Bathed in the same cold dew my brow and hair, 35
And sate as thus upon that slope of lawn

Under the self-same bough, and heard as there
The birds, the fountains and the ocean hold
Sweet talk in music through the enamoured air,
And then a vision on my brain was rolled. 40

As in that trance of wondrous thought I lay,
This was the tenour of my waking dream:—
Methought I sate beside a public way

Thick strewn with summer dust, and a great stream
Of people there was hurrying to and fro, 45
Numerous as gnats upon the evening gleam;
All hastening onward, yet none seemed to know
Whither he went, or whence he came, or why
He made one of the multitude, and so
Was borne amid the crowd, as through the sky 50
One of the million leaves of summer's bier;
Old age and youth, manhood and infancy
Mixed in one mighty torrent did appear,
Some flying from the thing they feared, and some
Seeking the object of another's fear; 55
And others as with steps towards the tomb,
Pored on the trodden worms that crawled beneath,
And others mournfully within the gloom
Of their own shadow walked and called it death;
And some fled from it as it were a ghost, 60
Half fainting in the affliction of vain breath:
But more, with motions which each other crost,
Pursued or shunned the shadows the clouds threw,
Or birds within the noon-day æther lost,
Upon that path where flowers never grew,— 65
And, weary with vain toil and faint for thirst,
Heard not the fountains, whose melodious dew
Out of their mossy cells for ever burst;
Nor felt the breeze which from the forest told
Of grassy paths and wood-lawns interspersed 70
With overarching elms and caverns cold,
And violet banks where sweet dreams brood, but they
Pursued their serious folly as of old.
And as I gazed, methought that in the way
The throng grew wilder, as the woods of June 75
When the south wind shakes the extinguished day,
And a cold glare, intenser than the noon,
But icy cold, obscured with blinding light
The sun, as he the stars. Like the young moon

When on the sunlit limits of the night 80
 Her white shell trembles amid crimson air,
 And whilst the sleeping tempest gathers might
 Doth, as the herald of its coming, bear
 The ghost of its dead mother, whose dim form
 Bends in dark æther from her infant's chair,— 85
 So came a chariot on the silent storm
 Of its own rushing splendour, and a Shape
 So sate within, as one whom years deform,
 Beneath a dusky hood and double cape,
 Crouching within the shadow of a tomb; 90
 And o'er what seemed the head a cloud-like crape
 Was bent, a dun and faint ætherial gloom
 Tempering the light. Upon the chariot beam
 A Janus-visaged Shadow did assume
 The guidance of that wonder-winged team; 95
 The shapes which drew it in thick lightnings
 Were lost:—I heard alone on the air's soft stream
 The music of their ever-moving wings.
 All the four faces of that charioteer
 Had their eyes banded; little profit brings 100
 Speed in the van and blindness in the rear,
 Nor then avail the beams that quench the sun
 Or that with banded eyes could pierce the sphere
 Of all that is, has been or will be done;
 So ill was the car guided—but it past 105
 With solemn speed majestically on.
 The crowd gave way, and I arose aghast,
 Or seemed to rise, so mighty was the trance,
 And saw, like clouds upon the thunder blast,
 The million with fierce song and maniac dance 110
 Raging around—such seemed the jubilee
 As when to greet some conqueror's advance
 Imperial Rome poured forth her living sea
 From senate-house, and forum, and theatre,
 When 115 upon the free

Had bound a yoke, which soon they stooped to bear.
Nor wanted here the just similitude
Of a triumphal pageant, for where'er
The chariot rolled, a captive multitude
Was driven;—all those who had grown old in power
Or misery,—all who had their age subdued 121
By action or by suffering, and whose hour
Was drained to its last sand in weal or woe,
So that the trunk survived both fruit and flower;—
All those whose fame or infamy must grow 123
Till the great winter lay the form and name
Of this green earth with them for ever low;—
All but the sacred few who could not tame
Their spirits to the conquerors—but as soon
As they had touched the world with living flame, 130
Fled back like eagles to their native noon,
Or those who put aside the diadem
Of earthly thrones or gems . . .
Were there, of Athens or Jerusalem,
Were neither mid the mighty captives seen, 135
Nor mid the ribald crowd that followed them,
Nor those who went before fierce and obscene.
The wild dance maddens in the van, and those
Who lead it—fleet as shadows on the green,
Outspeed the chariot, and without repose 140
Mix with each other in tempestuous measure
To savage music, wilder as it grows,
They, tortured by their agonizing pleasure,
Convulsed and on the rapid whirlwinds spun
Of that fierce spirit, whose unholy leisure 145
Was soothed by mischief since the world begun,
Throw back their heads and loose their streaming hair;
And in their dance round her who dims the sun,
Maidens and youths fling their wild arms in air
As their feet twinkle; they recede, and now 150
Bending within each other's atmosphere,

Kindle invisibly—and as they glow,
 Like moths by light attracted and repelled,
 Oft to their bright destruction come and go,
 Till like two clouds into one vale impelled 155
 That shake the mountains when their lightnings mingle
 And die in rain—the fiery band which held

Their natures, snaps—while the shock still may tingle;
 One falls and then another in the path
 Senseless—nor is the desolation single, 160

Yet ere I can say *where*—the chariot hath
 Past over them—nor other trace I find
 But as of foam after the ocean's wrath

Is spent upon the desert shore;—behind,
 Old men and women foully disarrayed, 165
 Shake their gray hairs in the insulting wind,

And follow in the dance, with limbs decayed,
 Seeking to reach the light which leaves them still
 Farther behind and deeper in the shade.

But not the less with impotence of will 170
 They wheel, though ghastly shadows interpose
 Round them and round each other, and fulfil

Their work, and in the dust from whence they rose
 Sink, and corruption veils them as they lie,
 And past in these performs what in those. 175

Struck to the heart by this sad pageantry,
 Half to myself I said—And what is this?
 Whose shape is that within the car? And why—

I would have added—is all here amiss?—
 But a voice answered—"Life!"—I turned, and knew 180
 (O Heaven, have mercy on such wretchedness!)

That what I thought was an old root which grew
 To strange distortion out of the hill side,
 Was indeed one of those deluded crew,

And that the grass, which methought hung so wide 185
 And white, was but his thin discoloured hair,
 And that the holes he vainly sought to hide,

Were or had been eyes:—"If thou canst, forbear
To join the dance, which I had well forborne!"
Said the grim Feature (of my thought aware). 190

"I will unfold that which to this deep scorn
Led me and my companions, and relate
The progress of the pageant since the morn;
"If thirst of knowledge shall not then abate,
Follow it thou even to the night, but I 195
Am weary."—Then like one who with the weight

Of his own words is staggered, wearily
He paused; and ere he could resume, I cried:
"First, who art thou?"—"Before thy memory,
"I feared, loved, hated, suffered, did and died, 200
And if the spark with which Heaven lit my spirit
Had been with purer nutriment supplied,

"Corruption would not now thus much inherit
Of what was once Rousseau,—nor this disguise 204
Stain that which ought to have disdained to wear it;

"If I have been extinguished, yet there rise
A thousand beacons from the spark I bore"—
"And who are those chained to the car?"—"The wise,

"The great, the unforgotten,—they who wore
Mitres and helms and crowns, or wreaths of light, 210
Signs of thought's empire over thought—their lore

"Taught them not this, to know themselves; their might
Could not repress the mystery within,
And for the morn of truth they feigned, deep night

"Caught them ere evening."—"Who is he with chin
Upon his breast, and hands crost on his chain?"— 216
"The child of a fierce hour; he sought to win

"The world, and lost all that it did contain
Of greatness, in its hope destroyed; and more
Of fame and peace than virtue's self can gain 220

"Without the opportunity which bore
Him on its eagle pinions to the peak
From which a thousand climbers have before

"Fallen, as Napoleon fell."—I felt my cheek
Alter, to see the shadow pass away, 225
Whose grasp had left the giant world so weak,
That every pigmy kicked it as it lay;
And much I grieved to think how power and will
In opposition rule our mortal day,
And why God made irreconcilable 230
Good and the means of good; and for despair
I half disdained mine eyes' desire to fill
With the spent vision of the times that were
And scarce have ceased to be.—"Dost thou behold,"
Said my guide, "those spoilers spoiled, Voltaire, 235
"Frederick, and Paul, Catherine, and Leopold,
And hoary anarchists, demagogues, and sage—
names which the world thinks always old,
"For in the battle Life and they did wage,
She remained conqueror. I was overcome 240
By my own heart alone, which neither age,
"Nor tears, nor infamy, nor now the tomb
Could temper to its object."—"Let them pass,"
I cried, "the world and its mysterious doom
"Is not so much more glorious than it was, 245
That I desire to worship those who drew
New figures on its false and fragile glass
"As the old faded."—"Figures ever new
Rise on the bubble, paint them as you may;
We have but thrown, as those before us threw, 250
"Our shadows on it as it past away.
But mark how chained to the triumphal chair
The mighty phantoms of an elder day;
"All that is mortal of great Plato there
Expiates the joy and woe his master knew not; 255
The star that ruled his doom was far too fair,
"And life, where long that flower of Heaven grew not,
Conquered that heart by love, which gold, or pain,
Or age, or sloth, or slavery could subdue not.

"And near him walk the twain, 260
The tutor and his pupil, whom Dominion
Followed as tame as vulture in a chain.

"The world was darkened beneath either pinion
Of him whom from the flock of conquerors
Fame singled out for her thunder-bearing minion; 265

"The other long outlived both woes and wars,
Throned in the thoughts of men, and still had kept
The jealous key of truth's eternal doors,

"If Bacon's eagle spirit had not leapt
Like lightning out of darkness—he compelled 270
The Proteus shape of Nature as it slept

"To wake, and lead him to the caves that held
The treasure of the secrets of its reign.
See the great bards of elder time, who quelled

"The passions which they sung, as by their strain 275
May well be known: their living melody
Tempers its own contagion to the vein

"Of those who are infected with it—I
Have suffered what I wrote, or viler pain!
And so my words have seeds of misery— 280

"Even as the deeds of others, not as theirs."
And then he pointed to a company,

'Midst whom I quickly recognized the heirs
Of Cæsar's crime, from him to Constantine;
The anarch chiefs, whose force and murderous snares

Had founded many a sceptre-bearing line, 285
And spread the plague of gold and blood abroad:
And Gregory and John, and men divine,

Who rose like shadows between man and God;
Till that eclipse, still hanging over heaven, 290
Was worshipped by the world o'er which they strode,

For the true sun it quenched—"Their power was given
But to destroy," replied the leader:—"I
Am one of those who have created, even

"If it be but a world of agony."— 295

"Whence camest thou? and whither goest thou?
How did thy course begin?" I said, "and why?"

"Mine eyes are sick of this perpetual flow
Of people, and my heart sick of one sad thought—
Speak!"—"Whence I am, I partly seem to know, 300

"And how and by what paths I have been brought
To this dread pass, methinks even thou mayst guess;—
Why this should be, my mind can compass not;

"Whither the conqueror hurries me, still less;—
But follow thou, and from spectator turn 305
Actor or victim in this wretchedness,

"And what thou wouldst be taught I then may learn
From thee. Now listen:—In the April prime,
When all the forest tips began to burn

"With kindling green, touched by the azure clime 310
Of the young season, I was laid asleep
Under a mountain, which from unknown time

"Had yawned into a cavern, high and deep;
And from it came a gentle rivulet,
Whose water, like clear air, in its calm sweep 315

"Bent the soft grass, and kept for ever wet
The stems of the sweet flowers, and filled the grove
With sounds, which whoso hears must needs forget

"All pleasure and all pain, all hate and love,
Which they had known before that hour of rest; 320
A sleeping mother then would dream not of

"Her only child who died upon the breast
At eventide—a king would mourn no more
The crown of which his brows were dispossessed

"When the sun lingered o'er his ocean floor, 325
To gild his rival's new prosperity.
Thou wouldst forget thus vainly to deplore

"Ills, which if ill can find no cure from thee,
The thought of which no other sleep will quell,
Nor other music blot from memory, 330

"So sweet and deep is the oblivious spell;
And whether life had been before that sleep
The heaven which I imagine, or a hell

"Like this harsh world in which I wake to weep,
I know not. I arose, and for a space 335
The scene of woods and waters seemed to keep,

"Though it was now broad day, a gentle trace
Of light diviner than the common sun
Sheds on the common earth, and all the place

"Was filled with magic sounds woven into one. 340
Oblivious melody, confusing sense
Amid the gliding waves and shadows dun;

"And, as I looked, the bright omnipresence
Of morning through the orient cavern flowed,
And the sun's image radiantly intense 345

"Burned on the waters of the well that glowed
Like gold, and threaded all the forest's maze
With winding paths of emerald fire; there stood

"Amid the sun, as he amid the blaze
Of his own glory, on the vibrating 350
Floor of the fountain, paved with flashing rays,

"A Shape all light, which with one hand did fling
Dew on the earth, as if she were the dawn,
And the invisible rain did ever sing

"A silver music on the mossy lawn; 355
And still before me on the dusky grass,
Iris her many-coloured scarf had drawn:

"In her right hand she bore a crystal glass,
Mantling with bright Nepenthe; the fierce splendour
Fell from her as she moved under the mass 360

"Of the deep cavern, and with palms so tender,
Their tread broke not the mirror of its billow,
Glided along the river, and did bend her

"Head under the dark boughs, till like a willow,
Her fair hair swept the bosom of the stream 365
That whispered with delight to be its pillow.

"As one enamoured is upborne in dream
O'er lily-paven lakes 'mid silver mist,
To wondrous music, so this shape might seem

"Partly to tread the waves with feet which kissed 370
The dancing foam; partly to glide along
The air which roughened the moist amethyst,

"Or the faint morning beams that fell among
The trees, or the soft shadows of the trees;
And her feet, ever to the ceaseless song 375

"Of leaves, and winds, and waves, and birds, and bees,
And falling drops, moved in a measure new
Yet sweet, as on the summer evening breeze,

"Up from the lake a shape of golden dew
Between two rocks, athwart the rising moon, 380
Dances i' the wind, where never eagle flew;

"And still her feet, no less than the sweet tune
To which they moved, seemed as they moved to blot
The thoughts of him who gazed on them; and soon

"All that was, seemed as if it had been not; 385
And all the gazer's mind was strewn beneath
Her feet like embers; and she, thought by thought,

"Trampled its sparks into the dust of death;
As day upon the threshold of the east
Treads out the lamps of night, until the breath 390

"Of darkness re-illumine even the least
Of heaven's living eyes—like day she came,
Making the night a dream; and ere she ceased

"To move, as one between desire and shame
Suspended, I said—If, as it doth seem, 395
Thou comest from the realm without a name,

"Into this valley of perpetual dream,
Show whence I came, and where I am, and why—
Pass not away upon the passing stream.

"Arise and quench thy thirst, was her reply. 400
And as a shut lily stricken by the wand
Of dewy morning's vital alchemy,

"I rose; and, bending at her sweet command,
Touched with faint lips the cup she raised,
And suddenly my brain became as sand 405

"Where the first wave had more than half erased
The track of deer on desert Labrador;
Whilst the wolf, from which they fled amazed,

"Leaves his stamp visibly upon the shore,
Until the second bursts;—so on my sight 410
Burst a new vision, never seen before,

"And the fair shape waned in the coming light,
As veil by veil the silent splendour drops
From Lucifer, amid the chrysolite

"Of sun-rise, ere it tinge the mountain tops; 415
And as the presence of that fairest planet,
Although unseen, is felt by one who hopes

"That his day's path may end as he began it,
In that star's smile, whose light is like the scent
Of a jonquil when evening breezes fan it, 420

"Or the soft note in which his dear lament
The Brescian shepherd breathes, or the caress
That turned his weary slumber to content;

"So knew I in that light's severe excess
The presence of that shape which on the stream 425
Moved, as I moved along the wilderness,

"More dimly than a day-appearing dream,
The ghost of a forgotten form of sleep;
A light of heaven, whose half-extinguished beam

"Through the sick day in which we wake to weep, 430
Glimmers, for ever sought, for ever lost;
So did that shape its obscure tenour keep

"Beside my path, as silent as a ghost;
But the new Vision, and the cold bright car,
With solemn speed and stunning music, crost 435

"The forest, and as if from some dread war
Triumphantly returning, the loud million
Fiercely extolled the fortune of her star.

- "A moving arch of victory, the vermilion
And green and azure plumes of Iris had
Built high over her wind-winged pavilion, 440
- "And underneath ætherial glory clad
The wilderness, and far before her flew
The tempest of the splendour, which forbade
- "Shadow to fall from leaf and stone; the crew 445
Seemed in that light, like atomies to dance
Within a sunbeam;—some upon the new
- "Embroidery of flowers, that did enhance
The grassy vesture of the desert, played,
Forgetful of the chariot's swift advance; 450
- "Others stood gazing, till within the shade
Of the great mountain its light left them dim;
Others outsped it; and others made
- "Circles around it, like the clouds that swim
Round the high moon in a bright sea of air; 455
And more did follow, with exulting hymn,
- "The chariot and the captives fettered there:—
But all like bubbles on an eddy flood
Fell into the same track at last, and were
- "Borne onward.—I among the multitude 460
Was swept—me, sweetest flowers delayed not long;
Me, not the shadow nor the solitude;
- "Me, not that falling stream's Lethean song;
Me, not the phantom of that early form,
Which moved upon its motion—but among 465
- "The thickest billows of that living storm
I plunged, and bared my bosom to the clime
Of that cold light, whose airs too soon deform.
- "Before the chariot had begun to climb
The opposing steep of that mysterious dell, 470
Behold a wonder worthy of the rhyme
- "Of him who from the lowest depths of hell,
Through every paradise and through all glory,
Love led serene, and who returned to tell

"The words of hate and awe; the wondrous story 475
How all things are transfigured except Love;
For deaf as is a sea, which wrath makes hoary,

"The world can hear not the sweet notes that move
The sphere whose light is melody to lovers—
A wonder worthy of his rhyme.—The grove 480

"Grew dense with shadows to its inmost covers,
The earth was grey with phantoms, and the air
Was peopled with dim forms, as when there hovers

"A flock of vampire-bats before the glare
Of the tropic sun, bringing, ere evening, 485
Strange night upon some Indian isle;—thus were

"Phantoms diffused around; and some did fling
Shadows of shadows, yet unlike themselves,
Behind them; some like eaglets on the wing

"Were lost in the white day; others like elves 490
Danced in a thousand unimagined shapes
Upon the sunny streams and grassy shelves;

"And others sate chattering like restless apes
On vulgar hands,

Some made a cradle of the ermined capes 495

"Of kingly mantles; some across the tiar
Of pontiffs sate like vultures; others played
Under the crown which girt with empire

"A baby's or an idiot's brow, and made
Their nests in it. The old anatomies 500
Sate hatching their bare broods under the shade

"Of dæmon wings, and laughed from their dead eyes
To re-assume the delegated power,
Arrayed in which those worms did monarchize,

"Who made this earth their charnel. Others more 505
Humble, like falcons, sate upon the fist
Of common men, and round their heads did soar;

"Or like small gnats and flies, as thick as mist
On evening marshes, thronged about the brow
Of lawyers, statesmen, priest and theorist;— 510

"And others, like discoloured flakes of snow
On fairest bosoms and the sunniest hair,
Fell, and were melted by the youthful glow

"Which they extinguished; and, like tears, they were
A veil to those from whose faint lids they rained 515
In drops of sorrow. I became aware

"Of whence those forms proceeded which thus stained
The track in which we moved. After brief space,
From every form the beauty slowly waned;

"From every firmest limb and fairest face 520
The strength and freshness fell like dust, and left
The action and the shape without the grace

"Of life. The marble brow of youth was cleft
With care; and in those eyes where once hope shone,
Desire, like a lioness bereft 525

"Of her last cub, glared ere it died; each one
Of that great crowd sent forth incessantly
These shadows, numerous as the dead leaves blown

"In autumn evening from a poplar tree.
Each like himself and like each other were 530
At first; but some distorted seemed to be

"Obscure clouds, moulded by the casual air;
And of this stuff the car's creative ray
Wrought all the busy phantoms that were there,

"As the sun shapes the clouds; thus on the way 535
Mask after mask fell from the countenance
And form of all; and long before the day

"Was old, the joy which waked like heaven's glance
The sleepers in the oblivious valley, died;
And some grew weary of the ghastly dance, 540

"And fell, as I have fallen, by the way-side;—
Those soonest from whose forms most shadows past,
And least of strength and beauty did abide.

"Then, what is life? I cried."—

POEMS WRITTEN FROM 1814 TO 1816.

STANZA, WRITTEN AT BRACKNELL.

THY dewy looks sink in my breast;
 Thy gentle words stir poison there;
 Thou hast disturbed the only rest
 That was the portion of despair!
 Subdued to Duty's hard controul,
 I could have borne my wayward lot:
 The chains that bind this ruined soul
 Had cankered then—but crushed it not.

TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN.

I.

MINE eyes were dim with tears unshed;
 Yes, I was firm—thus wert not thou;—
 My baffled looks did fear yet dread
 To meet thy looks—I could not know
 How anxiously they sought to shine
 With soothing pity upon mine.

II.

To sit and curb the soul's mute rage
 Which preys upon itself alone;
 To curse the life which is the cage
 Of fettered grief that dares not groan,
 Hiding from many a careless eye
 The scornèd load of agony.

III.

Whilst thou alone, then not regarded,
 The thou alone should be,
 To spend years thus, and be rewarded,
 As thou, sweet love, requited me

When none were near—Oh! I did wake
From torture for that moment's sake.

IV.

Upon my heart thy accents sweet
Of peace and pity fell like dew
On flowers half dead;—thy lips did meet
Mine tremblingly; thy dark eyes threw
Their soft persuasion on my brain,
Charming away its dream of pain.

V.

We are not happy, sweet! our state
Is strange and full of doubt and fear;
More need of words that ills abate;—
Reserve or censure come not near
Our sacred friendship, lest there be
No solace left for thee and me.

VI.

Gentle and good and mild thou art,
Nor can I live if thou appear
Aught but thyself, or turn thine heart
Away from me, or stoop to wear
The mask of scorn, although it be
To hide the love thou feel'st for me.

TO ———.

YET look on me—take not thine eyes away,
Which feed upon the love within mine own,
Which is indeed but the reflected ray
Of thine own beauty from my spirit thrown.
Yet speak to me—thy voice is as the tone
Of my heart's echo, and I think I hear
That thou yet lovest me; yet thou alone
Like one before a mirror, without care
Of aught but thine own features, imaged there;
And yet I wear out life in watching thee;
A toil so sweet at times, and thou indeed
Art kind when I am sick, and pity me.

THE SUNSET.

THERE late was One within whose subtle being,
 As light and wind within some delicate cloud
 That fades amid the blue noon's burning sky,
 Genius and death contended. None may know
 The sweetness of the joy which made his breath 5
 Fail, like the trances of the summer air,
 When, with the Lady of his love, who then
 First knew the unreserve of mingled being,
 He walked along the pathway of a field
 Which to the east a hoar wood shadowed o'er, 10
 But to the west was open to the sky.
 There now the sun had sunk, but lines of gold
 Hung on the ashen clouds, and on the points
 Of the far level grass and nodding flowers
 And the old dandelion's hoary beard, 15
 And, mingled with the shades of twilight, lay
 On the brown massy woods—and in the east
 The broad and burning moon lingeringly rose
 Between the black trunks of the crowded trees,
 While the faint stars were gathering overhead.— 20
 "Is it not strange, Isabel," said the youth,
 "I never saw the sun? We will walk here
 To-morrow; thou shalt look on it with me."

That night the youth and lady mingled lay
 In love and sleep—but when the morning came 25
 The lady found her lover dead and cold.
 Let none believe that God in mercy gave
 That stroke. The lady died not, nor grew wild,
 But year by year lived on—in truth I think
 Her gentleness and patience and sad smiles, 30
 And that she did not die, but lived to tend
 Her aged father, were a kind of madness,
 If madness 'tis to be unlike the world.
 For but to see her were to read the tale
 Woven by some subtlest bard, to make hard hearts 35
 Dissolve away in wisdom-working grief;—

Her eyes were black and lustreless and wan :
Her eyelashes were worn away with tears,
Her lips and cheeks were like things dead—so pale ;
Her hands were thin, and through their wandering veins
And weak articulations might be seen 41
Day's ruddy light. The tomb of thy dead self
Which one vexed ghost inhabits, night and day,
Is all, lost child, that now remains of thee !

“Inheritor of more than earth can give, 45
Passionless calm and silence unreprieved,
Whether the dead find, oh, not sleep ! but rest,
And are the uncomplaining things they seem,
Or live, or drop in the deep sea of Love ;
Oh, that like thine, mine epitaph were—Peace !” 50
This was the only moan she ever made.

FRAGMENT ON HOME.

DEAR home, thou scene of earliest hopes and joys,
The least of which wronged Memory ever makes
Bitterer than all thine unremembered tears.

FRAGMENT OF A GHOST-STORY.

A SHOVEL of his ashes took
From the hearth's obscurest nook,
Muttering mysteries as she went.
Helen and Henry knew that Granny
Was as much afraid of ghosts as any,
And so they followed hard—
But Helen clung to her brother's arm,
And her own spasm made her shake.

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1817.

MARIANNE'S DREAM.

I.

A PALE dream came to a Lady fair,
And said, A boon, a boon, I pray!
I know the secrets of the air,
And things are lost in the glare of day,
Which I can make the sleeping see,
If they will put their trust in me.

II.

And thou shalt know of things unknown,
If thou wilt let me rest between
The veiny lids, whose fringe is thrown
Over thine eyes so dark and sheen:
And half in hope, and half in fright,
The Lady closed her eyes so bright.

III.

At first all deadly shapes were driven
Tumultuously across her sleep,
And o'er the vast cope of bending heaven
All ghastly-visaged clouds did sweep;
And the Lady ever looked to spy
If the golden sun shone forth on high.

IV.

And as towards the east she turned,
She saw aloft in the morning air,
Which now with hues of sunrise burned,
A great black Anchor rising there;
And wherever the Lady turned her eyes,
It hung before her in the skies.

V.

The sky was blue as the summer sea,
The depths were cloudless over head,
The air was calm as it could be,
There was no sight or sound of dread,

But that black Anchor floating still
Over the piny eastern hill.

VI.

The Lady grew sick with a weight of fear,
To see that Anchor ever hanging,
And veiled her eyes; she then did hear
The sound as of a dim low clanging,
And looked abroad if she might know
Was it aught else, or but the flow
Of the blood in her own veins, to and fro.

VII.

There was a mist in the sunless air,
Which shook as it were with an earthquake's shock,
But the very weeds that blossomed there
Were moveless, and each mighty rock
Stood on its basis steadfastly;
The Anchor was seen no more on high.

VIII.

But piled around, with summits hid
In lines of cloud at intervals,
Stood many a mountain pyramid
Among whose everlasting walls
Two mighty cities shone, and ever
Through the red mist their domes did quiver.

IX.

On two dread mountains, from whose crest,
Might seem, the eagle, for her brood,
Would ne'er have hung her dizzy nest,
Those tower-encircled cities stood.
A vision strange such towers to see,
Sculptured and wrought so gorgeously,
Where human art could never be.

X.

And columns framed of marble white,
And giant fanes, dome over dome
Piled, and triumphant gates, all bright
With workmanship, which could not come
From touch of mortal instrument,
Shot o'er the vales, or lustre lent
From its own shapes magnificent.

XI.

But still the Lady heard that clang
Filling the wide air far away;
And still the mist whose light did hang
Among the mountains shook alway,
So that the Lady's heart beat fast,
As half in joy, and half aghast,
On those high domes her look she cast.

XII.

Sudden, from out that city sprung
A light that made the earth grow red;
Two flames that each with quivering tongue
Licked its high domes, and over head
Among those mighty towers and fanes
Dropped fire, as a volcano rains
Its sulphurous ruin on the plains.

XIII.

And hark! a rush as if the deep
Had burst its bonds; she looked behind
And saw over the western steep
A raging flood descend, and wind
Through that wide vale; she felt no fear,
But said within herself, 'Tis clear
These towers are Nature's own, and she
To save them has sent forth the sea.

XIV.

And now those raging billows came
Where that fair Lady sate, and she
Was borne towards the showering flame
By the wild waves heaped tumultuously
And on a little plank, the flow
Of the whirlpool bore her to and fro.

XV.

The flames were fiercely vomited
From every tower and every dome,
And dreary light did widely shed
O'er that vast flood's suspended foam,
Beneath the smoke which hung its night
On the stained cope of heaven's light.

XVI.

The plank whereon that Lady sate
 Was driven through the chasms, about and about,
 Between the peaks so desolate
 Of the drowning mountains, in and out,
 As the thistle-beard on a whirlwind sails—
 While the flood was filling those hollow vales.

XVII.

At last her plank an eddy crost,
 And bore her to the city's wall,
 Which now the flood had reached almost;
 It might the stoutest heart appal
 To hear the fire roar and hiss
 Through the domes of those mighty palaces.

XVIII.

The eddy whirled her round and round
 Before a gorgeous gate, which stood
 Piercing the clouds of smoke which bound
 Its aëry arch with light like blood;
 She looked on that gate of marble clear,
 With wonder that extinguished fear.

XIX.

For it was filled with sculptures rarest,
 Of forms most beautiful and strange,
 Like nothing human, but the fairest
 Of winged shapes, whose legions range
 Throughout the sleep of those that are,
 Like this same Lady, good and fair.

XX.

And as she looked, still lovelier grew
 Those marble forms;—the sculptor sure
 Was a strong spirit, and the hue
 Of his own mind did there endure
 After the touch, whose power had braided
 Such grace, was in some sad change faded.

XXI.

She looked, the flames were dim, the flood
 Grew tranquil as a woodland river
 Winding through hills in solitude;
 Those marble shapes then seemed to quiver,

And their fair limbs to float in motion,
Like weeds unfolding in the ocean.

XXII.

And their lips moved; one seemed to speak,
When suddenly the mountains crackt,
And through the chasm the flood did break
With an earth-uplifting cataract:
The statues gave a joyous scream,
And on its wings the pale thin dream
Lifted the Lady from the stream.

XXIII.

The dizzy flight of that phantom pale
Waked the fair Lady from her sleep,
And she arose, while from the veil
Of her dark eyes the dream did creep,
And she walked about as one who knew
That sleep has sights as clear and true
As any waking eyes can view.

TO CONSTANTIA, SINGING.

I.

THUS to be lost and thus to sink and die,
Perchance were death indeed!—Constantia, turn!
In thy dark eyes a power like light doth lie,
Even though the sounds which were thy voice, which burn
Between thy lips, are laid to sleep;
Within thy breath, and on thy hair, like odour it is yet,
And from thy touch like fire doth leap.
Even while I write, my burning cheeks are wet,
Alas, that the torn heart can bleed, but not forget!

II.

A breathless awe, like the swift change
Unseen, but felt in youthful slumbers,
Wild, sweet, but uncommunicably strange,
Thou breathest now in fast ascending numbers.
The cope of heaven seems rent and cloven
By the enchantment of thy strain,

And on my shoulders wings are woven,
 To follow its sublime career,
 Beyond the mighty moons that wane
 Upon the verge of nature's utmost sphere,
 Till the world's shadowy walls are past and disappear.

III.

Her voice is hovering o'er my soul—it lingers
 O'ershadowing it with soft and lulling wings,
 The blood and life within those snowy fingers
 Teach witchcraft to the instrumental strings.
 My brain is wild, my breath comes quick—
 The blood is listening in my frame,
 And thronging shadows, fast and thick,
 Fall on my overflowing eyes;
 My heart is quivering like a flame;
 As morning dew, that in the sunbeam dies,
 I am dissolved in these consuming ecstasies.

IV.

I have no life, Constantia, now, but thee,
 Whilst, like the world-surrounding air, thy song
 Flows on, and fills all things with melody.—
 Now is thy voice a tempest swift and strong,
 On which, like one in trance upborne,
 Secure o'er rocks and waves I sweep,
 Rejoicing like a cloud of morn.
 Now 'tis the breath of summer night,
 Which when the starry waters sleep,
 Round western isles, with incense-blossoms bright,
 Lingering, suspends my soul in its voluptuous flight.

TO CONSTANTIA.

I.

THE rose that drinks the fountain dew
 In the pleasant air of noon,
 Grows pale and blue with altered hue—
 In the gaze of the nightly moon;
 For the planet of frost, so cold and bright,
 Makes it wan with her borrowed light.

II.

Such is my heart—roses are fair,
 And that at best a withered blossom;
 But thy false care did idly wear
 Its withered leaves in a faithless bosom;
 And fed with love, like air and dew,
 Its growth————

FRAGMENT: TO ONE SINGING.

My spirit like a charmed bark doth swim
 Upon the liquid waves of thy sweet singing,
 Far away into the regions dim
 Of rapture—as a boat, with swift sails winging
 Its way adown some many-winding river.

LINES TO WILLIAM GODWIN.

MIGHTY eagle! thou that soarest
 O'er the misty mountain forest,
 And amid the light of morning
 Like a cloud of glory hiest,
 And when night descends defiest
 The embattled tempests' warning!

TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

I.

THY country's curse is on thee, darkest crest
 Of that foul, knotted, many-headed worm
 Which rends our Mother's bosom—Priestly Pest!
 Masked Resurrection of a buried Form!

II.

Thy country's curse is on thee! Justice sold,
 Truth trampled, Nature's landmarks overthrown,
 And heaps of fraud-accumulated gold,
 Plead, loud as thunder, at Destruction's throne.

III.

And, whilst that sure slow Angel which aye stands
Watching the beck of Mutability
Delays to execute her high commands,
And, though a nation weeps, spares thine and thee,

IV.

O let a father's curse be on thy soul,
And let a daughter's hope be on thy tomb;
Be both, on thy grey head, a leaden cowl
To weigh thee down to thine approaching doom!

V.

I curse thee by a parent's outraged love,
By hopes long cherished and too lately lost,
By gentle feelings thou couldst never prove,
By griefs which thy stern nature never crost;

VI.

By those infantine smiles of happy light,
Which were a fire within a stranger's hearth,
Quenched even when kindled, in untimely night,
Hiding the promise of a lovely birth;

VII.

By those unpractised accents of young speech,
Which he who is a father thought to frame
To gentlest lore, such as the wisest teach—
Thou strike the lyre of mind! O grief and shame!

VIII.

By all the happy see in children's growth—
That undeveloped flower of budding years—
Sweetness and sadness interwoven both,
Source of the sweetest hopes and saddest fears—

IX.

By all the days under an hireling's care,
Of dull constraint and bitter heaviness,—
O wretched ye if ever any were,—
Sadder than orphans, yet not fatherless!

X.

By the false cant which on their innocent lips
Must hang like poison on an opening bloom,
By the dark creeds which cover with eclipse
Their pathway from the cradle to the tomb—

XL

By thy most impious Hell, and all its terror;
 By all the grief, the madness, and the guilt
 Of thine impostures, which must be their error—
 That sand on which thy crumbling power is built—

XII.

By thy complicity with lust and hate—
 Thy thirst for tears—thy hunger after gold—
 The ready frauds which ever on thee wait—
 The servile arts in which thou hast grown old—

XIII.

By thy most killing sneer, and by thy smile—
 By all the arts and snares of thy black den,
 And—for thou canst outweep the crocodile—
 By thy false tears—those millstones braining men—

XIV.

By all the hate which checks a father's love—
 By all the scorn which kills a father's care—
 By those most impious hands which dared remove
 Nature's high bounds—by thee—and by despair—

XV.

Yes, the despair which bids a father groan,
 And cry—my children are no longer mine—
 The blood within those veins may be mine own,
 But—Tyrant—their polluted souls are thine;—

XVI.

I curse thee—though I hate thee not—O slave!
 If thou couldst quench the earth-consuming Hell
 Of which thou art a dæmon, on thy grave
 This curse should be a blessing. Fare thee well!

TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.

I.

THE billows on the beach are leaping around it,
 The bark is weak and frail,
 The sea looks black, and the clouds that bound it
 Darkly strew the gale.
 Come with me, thou delightful child,
 Come with me, though the wave is wild,

And the winds are loose, we must not stay,
Or the slaves of the law may rend thee away.

II.

They have taken thy brother and sister dear,
They have made them unfit for thee ;
They have withered the smile and dried the tear
Which should have been sacred to me.
To a blighting faith and a cause of crime
They have bound them slaves in youthly prime,
And they will curse my name and thee
Because we are fearless and free.

III.

Come thou, belovèd as thou art ;
Another sleepeth still
Near thy sweet mother's anxious heart,
Which thou with joy shalt fill,
With fairest smiles of wonder thrown
On that which is indeed our own,
And which in distant lands will be
The dearest playmate unto thee.

IV.

Fear not the tyrants will rule for ever,
Or the priests of the evil faith ;
They stand on the brink of that raging river,
Whose waves they have tainted with death.
It is fed from the depth of a thousand dells,
Around them it foams and rages and swells ;
And their swords and their sceptres I floating see,
Like wrecks on the surge of eternity.

V.

Rest, rest, and shriek not, thou gentle child !
The rocking of the boat thou fearest,
And the cold spray and the clamour wild ?—
There sit between us two, thou dearest—
Me and thy mother—well we know
The storm at which thou tremblest so,
With all its dark and hungry graves,
Less cruel than the savage slaves
Who hunt us o'er these sheltering waves.

VI.

This hour will in thy memory
 Be a dream of days forgotten long,
 We soon shall dwell by the azure sea
 Of serene and golden Italy,
 Or Greece, the Mother of the free;
 And I will teach thine infant tongue
 To call upon those heroes old
 In their own language, and will mould
 Thy growing spirit in the flame
 Of Grecian lore, that by such name
 A patriot's birthright thou mayst claim!

CANCELLED PASSAGES OF THE POEM
TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.

I.

THE world is now our dwelling-place;
 Where'er the earth one fading trace
 Of what was great and free does keep,
 That is our home! . . .
 Mild thoughts of man's ungentle race
 Shall our contented exile reap;
 For who that in some happy place
 His own free thoughts can freely chase
 By woods and waves can clothe his face
 In cynic smiles? Child! we shall weep.

II.

 This lament,
 The memory of thy grievous wrong
 Will fade . . .
 But genius is Omnipotent
 To hallow . . .

ON FANNY GODWIN.

HER voice did quiver as we parted,
 Yet knew I not that heart was broken
 From which it came, and I departed
 Heeding not the words then spoken.
 Misery—O Misery,
 This world is all too wide for thee.

OTHO.

I.

THOU wert not, Cassius, and thou couldst not be,
 Last of the Romans, though thy memory claim
 From Brutus his own glory—and on thee
 Rests the full splendour of his sacred fame;
 Nor he who dared make the foul tyrant quail
 Amid his cowering senate with thy name,
 Though thou and he were great—it will avail
 To thine own fame that Otho's should not fail.

II.

'Twill wrong thee not—thou wouldst, if thou couldst feel,
 Abjure such envious fame—great Otho died
 Like thee—he sanctified his country's steel,
 At once the tyrant and tyrannicide,
 In his own blood—a deed it was to bring
 Tears from all men—though full of gentle pride,
 Such pride as from impetuous love may spring,
 That will not be refused its offering.

III.

Those whom nor power, nor lying faith, nor toil,
 Nor custom, queen of many slaves, makes blind,
 Have ever grieved that man should be the spoil
 Of his own weakness, and with earnest mind
 Fed hopes of its redemption, these recur
 Chastened by deathful victory now, and find
 Foundations in this foulest age, and stir
 Me whom they cheer to be their minister.

IV.

Dark is the realm of grief: but human things
 Those may not know who cannot weep for them.

* * * *

V.

Once more descend
 The shadows of my soul upon mankind,
 For to those hearts with which they never blend,
 Thoughts are but shadows which the flashing mind
 From the swift clouds which track its flight of fire,
 Casts on the gloomy world it leaves behind.

* * * *

FRAGMENT OF A SONG.

O THAT a chariot of cloud were mine!
 Of cloud which the wild tempest weaves in air,
 When the moon over the ocean's line
 Is spreading the locks of her bright grey hair.
 O that a chariot of cloud were mine!
 I would sail on the waves of the billowy wind
 To the mountain peak and the rocky lake,
 And the....

FRAGMENT: TO A FRIEND LEAVING PRISON.

For me, my friend, if not that tears did tremble
 In my faint eyes, and that my heart beat fast
 With feelings which make rapture pain resemble,
 Yet, from thy voice that falsehood starts aghast,
 I thank thee—let the tyrant keep
 His chains and tears, yea let him weep
 With rage to see thee freshly risen,
 Like strength from slumber, from the prison,
 In which he vainly hoped the soul to bind
 Which on the chains must prey that fetter humankind.

FRAGMENT: SATAN LOOSE.

A GOLDEN-WINGED Angel stood
 Before the Eternal Judgment-seat:
 His looks were wild, and Devils' blood
 Stained his dainty hands and feet.
 The Father and the Son
 Knew that strife was now begun.
 They knew that Satan had broken his chain,
 And with millions of dæmons in his train,
 Was ranging over the world again.
 Before the Angel had told his tale,
 A sweet and a creeping sound
 Like the rushing of wings was heard around;

And suddenly the lamps grew pale—
The lamps, before the Archangels seven,
That burn continually in heaven.

15

TWO FRAGMENTS TO MUSIC.

I.

SILVER key of the fountain of tears,
Where the spirit drinks till the brain is wild;
Softest grave of a thousand fears,
Where their mother, Care, like a drowsy child,
Is laid asleep in flowers.

II.

No, Music, thou art not the "food of Love,"
Unless Love feeds upon its own sweet self,
Till it becomes all Music murmurs of.

FRAGMENT: UNSATISFIED DESIRES.

To thirst and find no fill—to wail and wander
With short uneasy steps—to pause and ponder—
To feel the blood run through the veins and tingle
Where busy thought and blind sensation mingle;
To nurse the image of unfelt caresses
Till dim imagination just possesses
The half created shadow.

STANZA: WEALTH AND LOVE.

WEALTH and dominion fade into the mass
Of the great sea of human right and wrong,
When once from our possession they must pass;
But love, though misdirected, is among
The things which are immortal, and surpass
All that frail stuff which will be—or which was.

FRAGMENT : THOUGHTS.

My thoughts arise and fade in solitude,
 The verse that would invest them melts away
 Like moonlight in the heaven of spreading day :
 How beautiful they were, how firm they stood,
 Flecking the starry sky like woven pearl !

A HATE-SONG. (IMPROVISED.)

A HATER he came and sat by a ditch,
 And he took an old cracked lute ;
 And he sang a song which was more of a screech
 'Gainst a woman that was a brute.

LINES TO A CRITIC.

I.

HONEY from silkworms who can gather,
 Or silk from the yellow bee ?
 The grass may grow in winter weather
 As soon as hate in me.

II.

Hate men who cant, and men who pray,
 And men who rail like thee ;
 An equal passion to repay
 They are not coy like me.

III.

Or seek some slave of power and gold,
 To be thy dear heart's mate,
 Thy love will move that bigot cold
 Sooner than me thy hate.

IV.

A passion like the one I prove
 Cannot divided be ;
 I hate thy want of truth and love—
 How should I then hate thee ?

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1818.

SONNET, TO THE NILE.

MONTH after month the gathered rains descend
Drenching yon secret Æthiopian dells,
And from the desert's ice-girt pinnacles
Where Frost and Heat in strange embraces blend
On Atlas, fields of moist snow half depend.
Girt there with blasts and meteors Tempest dwells
By Nile's ærial urn, with rapid spells
Urging those waters to their mighty end.
O'er Egypt's land of Memory floods are level
And they are thine O Nile—and well thou knowest
That soul-sustaining airs and blasts of evil
And fruits and poisons spring where'er thou flowest.
Beware O Man—for knowledge must to thee
Like the great flood to Egypt, ever be.

PASSAGE OF THE APENNINES.

LISTEN, listen, Mary mine,
To the whisper of the Apennine,
It bursts on the roof like the thunder's roar,
Or like the sea on a northern shore,
Heard in its raging ebb and flow
By the captives pent in the cave below.
The Apennine in the light of day
Is a mighty mountain dim and grey,
Which between the earth and sky doth lay;
But when night comes, a chaos dread
On the dim starlight then is spread,
And the Apennine walks abroad with the storm.

THE PAST.

I.

WILT thou forget the happy hours
Which we buried in Love's sweet bowers,
Heaping over their corpses cold
Blossoms and leaves, instead of mould?
Blossoms which were the joys that fell,
And leaves, the hopes that yet remain.

II.

Forget the dead, the past? O yet
There are ghosts that may take revenge for it,
Memories that make the heart a tomb,
Regrets which glide through the spirit's gloom,
And with ghastly whispers tell
That joy, once lost, is pain.

SONNET.

LIFT not the painted veil which those who live
Call Life: though unreal shapes be pictured there,
And it but mimic all we would believe
With colours idly spread,—behind, lurk Fear
And Hope, twin destinies; who ever weave
Their shadows, o'er the chasm, sightless and drear.
I knew one who had lifted it—he sought,
For his lost heart was tender, things to love,
But found them not, alas! nor was there aught
The world contains, the which he could approve.
Through the unheeding many he did move,
A splendour among shadows, a bright blot
Upon this gloomy scene, a Spirit that strove
For truth, and like the Preacher found it not.

INVOCATION TO MISERY.

I.

COME, be happy!—sit by me,
Shadow-vested Misery:

Coy, unwilling, silent bride,
Mourning in thy robe of pride,
Desolation—deified!

II.

Come, be happy!—sit near me:
Sad as I may seem to thee,
I am happier far than thou,
Lady, whose imperial brow
Is endiademed with woe.

III.

Misery! we have known each other,
Like a sister and a brother
Living in the same lone home,
Many years—we must live some
Hours or ages yet to come.

IV.

'Tis an evil lot, and yet
Let us make the best of it;
If love lives when pleasure dies,
We will love, till in our eyes
This heart's Hell seem Paradise.

V.

Come, be happy!—lie thee down
On the fresh grass newly mown,
Where the Grasshopper doth sing
Merrily—one joyous thing
In a world of sorrowing!

VI.

There our tent shall be the willow,
And thine arm shall be my pillow;
Sounds and odours sorrowful
Because they once were sweet, shall lull
Us to slumber, deep and dull.

VII.

Ha! thy frozen pulses flutter
With a love thou darest not utter.
Thou art murmuring—thou art weeping—
Is thine icy bosom leaping
While my burning heart lies sleeping?

VIII.

Kiss me;—oh! thy lips are cold:
Round my neck thine arms enfold—
They are soft, but chill and dead;
And thy tears upon my head
Burn like points of frozen lead.

IX.

Hasten to the bridal bed—
Underneath the grave 'tis spread:
In darkness may our love be hid,
Oblivion be our coverlid—
We may rest, and none forbid.

X.

Clasp me till our hearts be grown
Like two shadows into one;
Till this dreadful transport may
Like a vapour fade away,
In the sleep that lasts alway.

XI.

We may dream, in that long sleep,
That we are not those who weep;
E'en as Pleasure dreams of thee,
Life-deserting Misery,
Thou mayst dream of her with me.

XII.

Let us laugh, and make our mirth,
At the shadows of the earth,
As dogs bay the moonlight clouds,
Which, like spectres wrapt in shrouds,
Pass o'er night in multitudes.

XIII.

All the wide world, beside us
Show like multitudinous
Puppets passing from a scene;
What but mockery can they mean,
Where I am—where thou hast been?

TO MARY ———.

O MARY dear, that you were here
 With your brown eyes bright and clear,
 And your sweet voice, like a bird
 Singing love to its lone mate
 In the ivy bower disconsolate; 5
 Voice the sweetest ever heard!
 And your brow more . . .
 Than the sky
 Of this azure Italy.
 Mary dear, come to me soon, 10
 I am not well whilst thou art far;
 As sunset to the spherèd moon,
 As twilight to the western star,
 Thou, belovèd, art to me.

 O Mary dear, that you were here; 15
 The Castle echo whispers "Here!"

THE WOODMAN AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

A WOODMAN whose rough heart was out of tune
 (I think such hearts yet never came to good)
 Hated to hear, under the stars or moon,

 One nightingale in an interfluous wood
 Sate the hungry dark with melody;— 5
 And as a vale is watered by a flood,

 Or as the moonlight fills the open sky
 Struggling with darkness—as a tuberosè
 Peoples some Indian dell with scents which lie

 Like clouds above the flower from which they rose, 10
 The singing of that happy nightingale
 In this sweet forest, from the golden close

 Of evening, till the star of dawn may fail,
 Was interfused upon the silentness;
 The folded roses and the violets pale 15

Heard her within their slumbers, the abyss
 Of heaven with all its planets; the dull ear
 Of the night-cradled earth; the loneliness
 Of the circumfluous waters,—every sphere
 And every flower and beam and cloud and wave, 20
 And every wind of the mute atmosphere,
 And every beast stretched in its rugged cave,
 And every bird lulled on its mossy bough,
 And every silver moth fresh from the grave,
 Which is its cradle—ever from below 25
 Aspiring like one who loves too fair, too far,
 To be consumed within the purest glow
 Of one serene and unapproachèd star,
 As if it were a lamp of earthly light,
 Unconscious, as some human lovers are, 30
 Itself how low, how high beyond all height
 The heaven where it would perish!—and every form
 That worshipped in the temple of the night
 Was awed into delight, and by the charm
 Girt as with an interminable zone, 35
 Whilst that sweet bird, whose music was a storm
 Of sound, shook forth the dull oblivion
 Out of their dreams; harmony became love
 In every soul but one.

* * * * *

And so this man returned with axe and saw 40
 At evening close from killing the tall tree,
 The soul of whom by nature's gentle law
 Was each a wood-nymph, and kept ever green
 The pavement and the roof of the wild copse,
 Chequering the sunlight of the blue serene 45
 With jagged leaves,—and from the forest tops
 Singing the winds to sleep—or weeping oft
 Fast showers of aerial water drops
 Into their mother's bosom, sweet and soft,
 Nature's pure tears which have no bitterness;— 50
 Around the cradles of the birds aloft

They spread themselves into the loveliness
Of fan-like leaves, and over pallid flowers
Hang like moist clouds:—or, where high branches kiss,

Make a green space among the silent bowers, 55
Like a vast fane in a metropolis,
Surrounded by the columns and the towers

All overwrought with branch-like traceries
In which there is religion—and the mute
Persuasion of unkindled melodies, 60

Odours and gleams and murmurs, which the lute
Of the blind pilot-spirit of the blast
Stirs as it sails, now grave and now acute,

Wakening the leaves and waves, ere it has past
To such brief unison as on the brain 65
One tone, which never can recur, has cast,

One accent never to return again.

* * * * *

The world is full of Woodmen who expel
Love's gentle Dryads from the haunts of life,
And vex the nightingales in every dell. 70

FRAGMENT OF AN ADDRESS TO BYRON.

O MIGHTY mind, in whose deep stream this age
Shakes like a reed in the unheeding storm,
Why dost thou curb not thine own sacred rage?

FRAGMENT TO SILENCE.

SILENCE! O well are Death and Sleep and Thou
Three brethren named, the guardians gloomy-winged
Of one abyss, where life, and truth, and joy
Are swallowed up—yet spare me, Spirit, pity me,
Until the sounds I hear become my soul,
And it has left these faint and weary limbs,

To track along the lapses of the air
 This wandering melody until it rests
 Among lone mountains in some . . .

FRAGMENT.

THE fierce beasts of the woods and wildernesses
 Track not the steps of him who drinks of it;
 For the light breezes, which for ever fleet
 Around its margin, heap the sand thereon.

FRAGMENT.

MY head is wild with weeping for a grief
 Which is the shadow of a gentle mind.
 I walk into the air, (but no relief
 To seek,—or haply, if I sought, to find;
 It came unsought);—to wonder that a chief
 Among men's spirits should be cold and blind.

FRAGMENT.

FLOURISHING vine, whose kindling clusters glow
 Beneath the autumnal sun, none taste of thee;
 For thou dost shroud a ruin, and below
 The rotting bones of dead antiquity.

SCENE FROM "TASSO."

MADDALO, *a Courtier.*
 MALPIGLIO, *a Poet.*

FIGNA, *a Minister.*
 ALBANO, *an Usher.*

MADDALO.

No access to the Duke! You have not said
 That the Count Maddalo would speak with him?

PIGNA.

Did you inform his Grace that Signor Pigna
Waits with state papers for his signature?

MALPIGLIO.

The Lady Leonora cannot know 5
That I have written a sonnet to her fame,
In which I Venus and Adonis.
You should not take my gold and serve me not.

ALBANO.

In truth I told her, and she smiled and said,
"If I am Venus, thou, coy Poesy 10
Art the Adonis whom I love, and he
The Erymanthian boar that wounded him."
O trust to me, Signor Malpiglio,
Those nods and smiles were favours worth the zechin.

MALPIGLIO.

The words are twisted in some double sense 15
That I reach not: the smiles fell not on me.

PIGNA.

How are the Duke and Duchess occupied?

ALBANO.

Buried in some strange talk. The Duke was leaning,
His finger on his brow, his lips unclosed.
The Princess sate within the window-seat, 20
And so her face was hid; but on her knee
Her hands were clasped, veined, and pale as snow,
And quivering—young Tasso, too, was there.

MADDALO.

Thou seest on whom from thine own worshipped heaven
Thou drawest down smiles—they did not rain on thee.

MALPIGLIO.

Would they were parching lightnings for his sake 25
On whom they fell!

SONG FOR "TASSO."

I.

I LOVED,—alas! our life is love;
But when we cease to breathe and move

I do suppose love ceases too.
 I thought, but not as now I do,
 Keen thoughts and bright of linkèd lore,
 Of all that men had thought before,
 And all that nature shows, and more.

II.

And still I love and still I think,
 But strangely, for my heart can drink
 The dregs of such despair, and live,
 And love;
 And if I think, my thoughts come fast,
 I mix the present with the past,
 And each seems uglier than the last.

III.

Sometimes I see before me flee
 A silver spirit's form, like thee,
 O Leonora, and I sit
 Still watching it,
 Till by the grated casement's ledge
 It fades, with such a sigh, as sedge
 Breathes o'er the breezy streamlet's edge.

MARENGHI.

I.

LET those who pine in pride or in revenge,
 Or think that ill for ill should be repaid,
 Or barter wrong for wrong, until the exchange
 Ruins the merchants of such thriftless trade,
 Visit the tower of Vado, and unlearn
 Such bitter faith beside Marenghi's urn.

II.

A massy tower yet overhangs the town,
 A scattered group of ruined dwellings now.
 * * * * *

III.

Another scene ere wise Etruria knew
 Its second ruin through internal strife,
 And tyrants through the breach of discord threw
 The chain which binds and kills. As death to life,

As winter to fair flowers (though some be poison)
So Monarchy succeeds to Freedom's foison.

IV.

In Pisa's church a cup of sculptured gold
Was brimming with the blood of feuds forsworn
At sacrament: more holy ne'er of old
Etrurians mingled with the shades forlorn
Of moon-illuminated forests.

* * * *

V.

And reconciling factions wet their lips
With that dread wine, and swear to keep each spirit
Undarkened by their country's last eclipse.

* * * *

VI.

Was Florence the liberticide? that band
Of free and glorious brothers who had planted,
Like a green isle 'mid Æthiopian sand,
A nation amid slaveries, disenchanted
Of many impious faiths—wise, just—do they,
Does Florence, gorge the sated tyrants' prey?

VII.

O foster-nurse of man's abandoned glory,
Since Athens, its great mother, sunk in splendour;
Thou shadowest forth that mighty shape in story,
As ocean its wrecked fanes, severe yet tender:—
The light-invested angel Poesy
Was drawn from the dim world to welcome thee.

VIII.

And thou in painting didst transcribe all taught
By loftiest meditations; marble knew
The sculptor's fearless soul—and as he wrought,
The grace of his own power and freedom grew.
And more than all, heroic, just, sublime,
Thou wert among the false—was this thy crime?

IX.

Yes; and on Pisa's marble walls the twine
Of direst weeds hangs garlanded—the snake
Inhabits its wrecked palaces;—in thine
A beast of subtler venom now doth make

Its lair, and sits amid their glories overthrown,
And thus thy victim's fate is as thine own.

X.

The sweetest flowers are ever frail and rare,
And love and freedom blossom but to wither;
And good and ill like vines entangled are,
So that their grapes may oft be plucked together;—
Divide the vintage ere thou drink, then make
Thy heart rejoice for dead Marengi's sake.

XI.

No record of his crime remains in story,
But if the morning bright as evening shone,
It was some high and holy deed, by glory
Pursued into forgetfulness, which won
From the blind crowd he made secure and free
The patriot's meed, toil, death, and infamy.

XII.

For when by sound of trumpet was declared
A price upon his life, and there was set
A penalty of blood on all who shared
So much of water with him as might wet
His lips, which speech divided not—he went
Alone, as you may guess, to banishment.

XIII.

Amid the mountains, like a hunted beast,
He hid himself, and hunger, toil, and cold,
Month after month endured; it was a feast
Whene'er he found those globes of deep-red gold
Which in the woods the strawberry-tree doth bear,
Suspended in their emerald atmosphere.

XIV.

And in the roofless huts of vast morasses,
Deserted by the fever-stricken serf,
All overgrown with reeds and long rank grasses,
And hillocks heaped of moss-inwoven turf,
And where the huge and speckled aloe made,
Rooted in stones, a broad and pointed shade,

XV.

He housed himself. There is a point of strand
Near Vado's tower and town; and on one side

The treacherous marsh divides it from the land,
 Shadowed by pine and ilex forests wide,
 And on the other creeps eternally,
 Through muddy weeds, the shallow sullen sea.

XVI.

Here the earth's breath is pestilence, and few
 But things whose nature is at war with life—
 Snakes and ill worms—endure its mortal dew.

The trophies of the clime's victorious strife—
 White bones, and locks of dun and yellow hair,
 And ringèd horns which buffaloes did wear—

* * * * *

XVII.

And at the utmost point [of land?] stood there
 The relics of a weed-inwoven cot,
 Thatched with broad flags. An outlawed murderer
 Had lived seven days there: the pursuit was hot
 When he was cold. The birds that were his grave
 Fell dead upon their feast in Vado's wave.

XVIII.

There must have lived within Marengi's heart
 That fire, more warm and bright than life or hope,
 (Which to the martyr makes his dungeon . . .

More joyous than the heaven's majestic cope
 To his oppressor), warring with decay,—
 Or he could ne'er have lived years, day by day.

XIX.

Nor was his state so lone as you might think.
 He had tamed every newt and snake and toad,
 And every seagull which sailed down to drink
 Those [marshes?] ere the death-mist went abroad.
 And each one, with peculiar talk and play,
 Wiled, not untaught, his silent time away.

XX.

And the marsh-meteors, like tame beasts, at night
 Came licking with blue tongues his veined feet;
 And he would watch them, as, like spirits bright,

In many entangled figures quaint and sweet
 To some enchanted music they would dance—
 Until they vanished at the first moon-glance.

XXI.

He mocked the stars by grouping on each weed
The summer dewdrops in the golden dawn;
And, ere the hoar-frost vanished, he could read
Its pictured footprints, as on spots of lawn
Its delicate brief touch in silence weaves
The likeness of the wood's remembered leaves.

XXII.

And many a fresh Spring-morn would he awaken—
While yet the unrisen sun made glow, like iron
Quivering in crimson fire, the peaks unshaken
Of mountains and blue isles which did environ
With air-clad crags that plain of land and sea,—
And feel liberty.

XXIII.

And in the moonless nights, when the dim ocean
Heaved underneath the heaven, . . .
Starting from dreams . . .

Communed with the immeasurable world;
And felt his life beyond his limbs dilated,
Till his mind grew like that it contemplated.

XXIV.

His food was the wild fig and strawberry;
The milky pine-nuts which the autumnal blast
Shakes into the tall grass; and such small fry
As from the sea by winter-storms are cast;
And the coarse bulbs of iris-flowers he found
Knotted in clumps under the spongy ground.

XXV.

And so were kindled powers and thoughts which made
His solitude less dark. When memory came
(For years gone by leave each a deepening shade),
His spirit basked in its internal flame,—
As, when the black storm hurries round at night,
The fisher basks beside his red firelight.

XXVI.

Yet human hopes and cares and faiths and errors,
Like billows unawakened by the wind,
Slept in Marenghi still; but that all terrors,
Weakness, and doubt, had withered in his mind.

His couch . . .

* * * * *

XXVII.

And, when he saw beneath the sunset's planet

A black ship walk over the crimson ocean,—
Its pennons streaming on the blasts that fan it,

Its sails and ropes all tense and without motion,
Like the dark ghost of the unburied even
Striding across the orange-coloured heaven,—

XXVIII.

The thought of his own kind who made the soul

Which sped that wingèd shape through night and day,—
The thought of his own country . . .

* * * * *

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1819.

LINES

WRITTEN DURING THE CASTLEREAGH ADMINISTRATION.

I.

CORPSES are cold in the tomb;
Stones on the pavement are dumb;
Abortions are dead in the womb,
And their mothers look pale—like the white shore
Of Albion, free no more.

II.

Her sons are as stones in the way—
They are masses of senseless clay—
They are trodden, and move not away,—
The abortion with which she travaileth
Is Liberty, smitten to death.

III.

Then trample and dance, thou Oppressor!
For thy victim is no redresser;
Thou art sole lord and possessor

Of her corpses, and clods, and abortions—they pave
Thy path to the grave.

IV.

Hearest thou the festal din
Of Death, and Destruction, and Sin,
And Wealth crying *Havock!* within?
'Tis the bacchanal triumph which makes Truth dumb,
Thine epithalamium.

V.

Aye, marry thy ghastly wife!
Let Fear and Disquiet and Strife
Spread thy couch in the chamber of Life!
Marry Ruin, thou Tyrant! and God be thy guide
To the bed of thy bride!

SONG TO THE MEN OF ENGLAND.

I.

MEN of England, wherefore plough
For the lords who lay ye low?
Wherefore weave with toil and care
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

II.

Wherefore feed, and clothe, and save,
From the cradle to the grave,
Those ungrateful drones who would
Drain your sweat—nay, drink your blood?

III.

Wherefore, Bees of England, forge
Many a weapon, chain, and scourge,
That these stingless drones may spoil
The forced produce of your toil?

IV.

Have ye leisure, comfort, calm,
Shelter, food, love's gentle balm?
Or what is it ye buy so dear
With your pain and with your fear?

V.

The seed ye sow, another reaps;
The wealth ye find, another keeps;
The robes ye weave, another wears;
The arms ye forge, another bears.

VI.

Sow seed,—but let no tyrant reap;
Find wealth,—let no impostor heap;
Weave robes,—let not the idle wear;
Forge arms,—in your defence to bear.

VII.

Shrink to your cellars, holes, and cells;
In halls ye deck another dwells.
Why shake the chains ye wrought? Ye see
The steel ye tempered glance on ye.

VIII.

With plough and spade, and hoe and loom,
Trace your grave, and build your tomb,
And weave your winding-sheet, till fair
England be your sepulchre.

SONNET: ENGLAND IN 1819.

AN old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king,—
Princes, the dregs of their dull race, who flow
Through public scorn,—mud from a muddy spring,—
Rulers who neither see, nor feel, nor know,
But leech-like to their fainting country cling,
Till they drop, blind in blood, without a blow,—
A people starved and stabbed in the untilled field,—
An army, which liberticide and prey
Makes as a two-edged sword to all who wield
Golden and sanguine laws which tempt and slay;
Religion Christless, Godless—a book sealed;
A Senate,—Time's worst statute unrepealed,—
Are graves, from which a glorious Phantom may
Burst, to illumine our tempestuous day.

SIMILES, FOR TWO POLITICAL CHARACTERS OF 1819.

I.

As from an ancestral oak
 Two empty ravens sound their clarion,
 Yell by yell, and croak by croak,
 When they scent the noonday smoke
 Of fresh human carrion:—

II.

As two gibbering night-birds flit
 From their bowers of deadly yew
 Through the night to frighten it,
 When the moon is in a fit,
 And the stars are none, or few:—

III.

As a shark and dog-fish wait
 Under an Atlantic isle,
 For the negro-ship, whose freight
 Is the theme of their debate,
 Wrinkling their red gills the while—

IV.

Are ye, two vultures sick for battle,
 Two scorpions under one wet stone,
 Two bloodless wolves whose dry throats rattle,
 Two crows perched on the murrained cattle,
 Two vipers tangled into one.

FRAGMENT: TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

PEOPLE of England, ye who toil and groan,
 Who reap the harvests which are not your own,
 Who weave the clothes which your oppressors wear,
 And for your own take the inclement air;
 Who build warm houses . . .
 And are like gods who give them all they have,
 And nurse them from the cradle to the grave . . .

* * * * *

What men gain fairly—that they should possess,
And children may inherit idleness,
From him who earns it—This is understood; 10
Private injustice may be general good.
But he who gains by base and armed wrong,
Or guilty fraud, or base compliances,
May be despoiled; even as a stolen dress
Is stript from a convicted thief, and he 15
Left in the nakedness of infamy.

NATIONAL ANTHEM.

I.

God prosper, speed, and save,
God raise from England's grave
Her murdered Queen!
Pave with swift victory
The steps of Liberty,
Whom Britons own to be
Immortal Queen.

II.

See, she comes throned on high,
On swift Eternity!
God save the Queen!
Millions on millions wait
Firm, rapid, and elate,
On her majestic state!
God save the Queen!

III.

She is thine own pure soul
Moulding the mighty whole,—
God save the Queen!
She is thine own deep love
Rained down from heaven above,—
Wherever she rest or move,
God save our Queen!

IV.

Wilder her enemies
In their own dark disguise,—
God save our Queen!
All earthly things that dare
Her sacred name to bear,
Strip them, as kings are, bare;
God save the Queen!

V.

Be her eternal throne
Built in our hearts alone—
God save the Queen!
Let the oppressor hold
Canopied seats of gold;
She sits enthroned of old
O'er our hearts Queen.

VI.

Lips touched by seraphim
Breathe out the choral hymn
"God save the Queen!"
Sweet as if angels sang,
Loud as that trumpet's clang
Wakening the world's dead gang,—
God save the Queen!

THE INDIAN SERENADE.

I.

I ARISE from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright:
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me—who knows how!
To thy chamber window, Sweet!

II.

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream—

And the Champak's odours fail
 Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
 The nightingale's complaint,
 It dies upon her heart;—
 As I must on thine,
 O! belovèd as thou art!

III.

O lift me from the grass!
 I die! I faint! I fail!
 Let thy love in kisses rain
 On my lips and eyelids pale.
 My cheek is cold and white, alas!
 My heart beats loud and fast;—
 Oh! press it to thine own again,
 Where it will break at last.

CANCELLED PASSAGE OF THE INDIAN SERENADE.

O pillow cold and wet with tears!
 Thou breathest sleep no more!

SOPHIA.

I.

THOU art fair, and few are fairer
 Of the Nymphs of earth or ocean;
 They are robes that fit the wearer—
 Those soft limbs of thine, whose motion
 Ever falls and shifts and glances
 As the life within them dances.

II.

Thy deep eyes, a double Planet,
 Gaze the wisest into madness
 With soft clear fire,—the winds that fan it
 Are those thoughts of tender gladness
 Which, like Zephyrs on the billow,
 Make thy gentle soul their pillow.

III.

If, whatever face thou paintest
In those eyes, grows pale with pleasure,
If the fainting soul is faintest
When it hears thy harp's wild measure,
Wonder not that when thou speakest
Of the weak my heart is weakest.

IV.

As dew beneath the wind of morning,
As the sea which Whirlwinds waken,
As the birds at thunder's warning,
As aught mute yet deeply shaken,
As one who feels an unseen spirit
Is my heart when thine is near it.

FRAGMENT: A SOUL KNOWN.

I AM as a spirit who has dwelt
Within his heart of hearts, and I have felt
His feelings, and have thought his thoughts, and known
The inmost converse of his soul, the tone
Unheard but in the silence of his blood,
When all the pulses in their multitude
Image the trembling calm of summer seas.
I have unlocked the golden melodies
Of his deep soul, as with a master-key,
And loosened them and bathed myself therein—
Even as an eagle in a thunder-mist
Clothing his wings with lightning.

FRAGMENT: IS NOT TO-DAY ENOUGH?

Is not to-day enough? Why do I peer
Into the darkness of the day to come?
Is not to-morrow even as yesterday?
And will the day that follows change thy doom?
Few flowers grow upon thy wintry way;
And who waits for thee in that cheerless home

Whence thou hast fled, whither thou must return
Charged with the load that makes thee faint and mourn?

FRAGMENT: QUESTIONS.

Is it that in some brighter sphere
We part from friends we meet with here?
Or do we see the Future pass
Over the Present's dusky glass?
Or what is that that makes us seem
To patch up fragments of a dream,
Part of which comes true, and part
Beats and trembles in the heart?

FRAGMENT: TO ITALY.

As the sunrise to the night,
As the north wind to the clouds,
As the earthquake's fiery flight,
Ruining mountain solitudes,
Everlasting Italy,
Be those hopes and fears on thee.

FRAGMENT OF AN INVITATION.

FOLLOW to the deep wood's weeds,
Follow to the wild briar dingle,
Where we seek to intermingle,
And the violet tells her tale
To the odour-scented gale,
For they two have enough to do
Of such work as I and you.

THE BIRTH OF PLEASURE.

At the creation of the Earth
Pleasure, that divinest birth,

From the soil of Heaven did rise,
 Wrapt in sweet wild melodies—
 Like an exhalation wreathing
 To the sound of air low-breathing
 Through Æolian pines, which make
 A shade and shelter to the lake
 Whence it rises soft and slow;
 Her life breathing [limbs] did flow
 In the harmony divine
 Of an ever-lengthening line
 Which enwrapt her perfect form
 With a beauty clear and warm.

FRAGMENT: LOVE THE UNIVERSE.

AND who feels discord now or sorrow?
 Love is the universe to-day—
 These are the slaves of dim to-morrow,
 Darkening Life's labyrinthine way.

FRAGMENT: WINE OF EGLANTINE.

I AM drunk with the honey wine
 Of the moon-unfolded eglantine,
 Which fairies catch in hyacinth bowls:—
 The bats, the dormice, and the moles
 Sleep in the walls or under the sward
 Of the desolate Castle yard;
 And when 'tis spilt on the summer earth
 Or its fumes arise among the dew,
 Their jocund dreams are full of mirth,
 They gibber their joy in sleep; for few
 Of the fairies bear those bowls so new!

FRAGMENT: CALM THOUGHTS.

YE gentle visitations of calm thought—
 Moods like the memories of happier earth,
 Which come arrayed in thoughts of little worth,

Like stars in clouds by the weak winds enwrought,
But that the clouds depart and stars remain,
While they remain, and ye, alas, depart !

FRAGMENT: DEAD BUT NOT FORGOTTEN.

AND where is truth ? On tombs ? for such to thee
Has been my heart—and thy dead memory
Has lain from childhood, many a changeful year—
Unchangingly preserved and buried there.

FRAGMENT:

“A GENTLE STORY OF TWO LOVERS YOUNG.”

A GENTLE story of two lovers young,
Who met in innocence and died in sorrow,
And of one selfish heart, whose rancour clung
Like curses on them ; are ye slow to borrow
The lore of truth from such a tale ?
Or in this world's deserted vale,
Do ye not see a star of gladness
Pierce the shadows of its sadness,
When ye are cold, that love is a light sent
From heaven, which none shall quench, to cheer the
innocent ?

FRAGMENT OF AN INCANTATION.

I.

WHEN a lover clasps his fairest,
Then be our dread sport the rarest.
Their caresses were like the chaff
In the tempest, and be our laugh
His despair—her epitaph !

II.

When a mother clasps her child,
Watch till dusty Death has piled

His cold ashes on the clay;
 She has loved it many a day—
 She remains,—it fades away.

FRAGMENT: AN UNFINISHED TALE.

ONE sung of thee who left the tale untold,
 Like the false dawns which perish in the bursting:
 Like empty cups of wrought and dædal gold,
 Which mock the lips with air, when they are thirsting.

FRAGMENT: THE ROMAN'S CHAMBER.

I.

IN the cave which wild weeds cover
 Wait for thine ætherial lover;
 For the pallid moon is waning,
 O'er the spiral cypress hanging
 And the moon no cloud is staining.

II.

It was once a Roman's chamber,
 Where he kept his darkest revels,
 And the wild weeds twine and clamber;
 It was then a chasm for devils.

FRAGMENT: ROME AND NATURE.

ROME has fallen, ye see it lying
 Heaped in undistinguished ruin:
 Nature is alone undying.

FRAGMENT: POETRY AND MUSIC.

How sweet it is to sit and read the tales
 Of mighty poets and to hear the while
 Sweet music, which when the attention fails
 Fills the dim pause——

FRAGMENT: THE SERPENT.

WAKE the serpent not—lest he
Should not know the way to go,—
Let him crawl which yet lies sleeping
Through the deep grass of the meadow!
Not a bee shall hear him creeping,
Not a may-fly shall awaken
From its cradling blue-bell shaken,
Not the starlight as he's sliding
Through the grass with silent gliding.

FRAGMENT: FITFUL RAIN.

THE fitful alternations of the rain,
When the chill wind, languid as with pain
Of its own heavy moisture, here and there
Drives through the grey and beamless atmosphere.

FRAGMENT: LOVE'S ATMOSPHERE.

THERE is a warm and gentle atmosphere
About the form of one we love, and thus
As in a tender mist our spirits are
Wrapt in the of that which is to us
The health of life's own life.

TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.

THY little footsteps on the sands
Of a remote and lonely shore;
The twinkling of thine infant hands,
Where now the worm will feed no more:
Thy mingled look of love and glee
When we returned to gaze on thee.

TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.

(With what truth I may say—
 Roma! Roma! Roma!
 Non è più come era prima!)

I.

My lost William, thou in whom
 Some bright spirit lived, and did
 That decaying robe consume
 Which its lustre faintly hid,
 Here its ashes find a tomb,
 But beneath this pyramid
 Thou art not—if a thing divine
 Like thee can die, thy funeral shrine
 Is thy mother's grief and mine.

II.

Where art thou, my gentle child?
 Let me think thy spirit feeds,
 With its life intense and mild,
 The love of living leaves and weeds,
 Among these tombs and ruins wild;—
 Let me think that through low seeds
 Of the sweet flowers and sunny grass,
 Into their hues and scents may pass
 A portion————

TWO FRAGMENTS TO MARY.

I.

My dearest Mary, wherefore hast thou gone,
 And left me in this dreary world alone!
 Thy form is here indeed—a lovely one—
 But thou art fled, gone down the dreary road,
 That leads to Sorrow's most obscure abode
 Thou sittest on the hearth of pale despair,
Where
 For thine own sake I cannot follow thee.

II.

The world is dreary,
And I am weary
Of wandering on without thee, Mary;
A joy was erewhile
In thy voice and thy smile,
And 'tis gone, when I should be gone too, Mary.

ON THE MEDUSA OF LEONARDO DA VINCI,

IN THE FLORENTINE GALLERY.

I.

It lieth, gazing on the midnight sky,
Upon the cloudy mountain peak supine;
Below, far lands are seen tremblingly;
Its horror and its beauty are divine.
Upon its lips and eyelids seems to lie
Loveliness like a shadow, from which shine,
Fiery and lurid, struggling underneath,
The agonies of anguish and of death.

II.

Yet it is less the horror than the grace
Which turns the gazer's spirit into stone;
Whereon the lineaments of that dead face
Are graven, till the characters be grown
Into itself, and thought no more can trace;
'Tis the melodious hue of beauty thrown
Athwart the darkness and the glare of pain,
Which humanize and harmonize the strain.

III.

And from its head as from one body grow,
As grass out of a watery rock,
Hairs which are vipers, and they curl and flow
And their long tangles in each other lock,
And with unending involutions shew
Their mailèd radiance, as it were to mock
The torture and the death within, and saw
The solid air with many a ragged jaw.

IV.

And from a stone beside, a poisonous eft
 Peeps idly into those Gorgonian eyes;
 Whilst in the air a ghastly bat, bereft
 Of sense, has flitted with a mad surprise
 Out of the cave this hideous light had cleft,
 And he comes hastening like a moth that hies
 After a taper; and the midnight sky
 Flares, a light more dread than obscurity.

V.

'Tis the tempestuous loveliness of terror;
 For from the serpents gleams a brazen glare
 Kindled by that inextricable error,
 Which makes a thrilling vapour of the air
 Become a and ever-shifting mirror
 Of all the beauty and the terror there—
 A woman's countenance, with serpent locks,
 Gazing in death on heaven from those wet rocks.

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY.

I.

THE Fountains mingle with the River
 And the Rivers with the Ocean,
 The winds of Heaven mix for ever
 With a sweet emotion;
 Nothing in the world is single;
 All things by a law divine
 In one spirit meet and mingle.
 Why not I with thine?—

II.

See the mountains kiss high Heaven
 And the waves clasp one another;
 No sister-flower would be forgiven
 If it disdained it's brother,
 And the sunlight clasps the earth
 And the moonbeams kiss the sea:
 What is all this sweet work worth
 If thou kiss not me?

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1820.

ARETHUSA.

I.

ARETHUSA arose
From her couch of snows
In the Acroceraunian mountains,—
From cloud and from crag,
With many a jag,
Shepherding her bright fountains.
She leapt down the rocks,
With her rainbow locks
Streaming among the streams;—
Her steps paved with green
The downward ravine
Which slopes to the western gleams:
And gliding and springing
She went, ever singing,
In murmurs as soft as sleep;
The Earth seemed to love her,
And Heaven smiled above her,
As she lingered towards the deep.

II.

Then Alpheus bold,
On his glacier cold,
With his trident the mountains strook
And opened a chasm
In the rocks;—with the spasm
All Erymanthus shook.
And the black south wind
It concealed behind
The urns of the silent snow,
And earthquake and thunder
Did rend in sunder
The bars of the springs below
The beard and the hair

Of the River-god were
Seen through the torrent's sweep,
As he followed the light
Of the fleet nymph's flight
To the brink of the Dorian deep.

III.

"Oh, save me! Oh, guide me!
And bid the deep hide me,
For he grasps me now by the hair!"
The loud Ocean heard,
To its blue depth stirred,
And divided at her prayer;
And under the water
The Earth's white daughter
Fled like a sunny beam;
Behind her descended
Her billows, unblended
With the brackish Dorian stream:—
Like a gloomy stain
On the emerald main
Alpheus rushed behind,—
As an eagle pursuing
A dove to its ruin
Down the streams of the cloudy wind.

IV.

Under the bowers
Where the Ocean Powers
Sit on their pearlèd thrones,
Through the coral woods
Of the weltering floods,
Over heaps of unvalued stones;
Through the dim beams
Which amid the streams
Weave a net-work of coloured light;
And under the caves,
Where the shadowy waves
Are as green as the forest's night:—
Outspeeding the shark,
And the sword-fish dark,
Under the ocean foam,

And up through the rifts
Of the mountain cliffs
They past to their Dorian home.

V.

And now from their fountains
In Enna's mountains,
Down one vale where the morning basks,
Like friends once parted
Grown single-hearted,
They ply their watery tasks.
At sunrise they leap
From their cradles steep
In the cave of the shelving hill;
At noon-tide they flow
Through the woods below
And the meadows of Asphodel;
And at night they sleep
In the rocking deep
Beneath the Ortygian shore;—
Like spirits that lie
In the azure sky
When they love but live no more.

THE QUESTION.

I.

I DREAMED that, as I wandered by the way,
Bare winter suddenly was changed to spring,
And gentle odours led my steps astray,
Mixed with a sound of waters murmuring
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling
Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,
But kissed it and then fled, as thou mightest in dream.

II.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
Daisies, those pearled Arcturi of the earth,
The constellated flower that never sets;
Faint oxlips; tender bluebells, at whose birth

The sod scarce heaved; and that tall flower that wets—
 Like a child, half in tenderness and mirth—
 Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears,
 When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

III.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
 Green cowbind and the moonlight-coloured May,
 And cherry-blossoms, and white cups, whose wine
 Was the bright dew, yet drained not by the day;
 And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,
 With its dark buds and leaves, wandering astray;
 And flowers azure, black, and streaked with gold,
 Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.

IV.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
 There grew broad flag-flowers, purple pranked with white,
 And starry river buds among the sedge,
 And floating water-lilies, broad and bright,
 Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
 With moonlight beams of their own watery light;
 And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green
 As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

V.

Methought that of these visionary flowers
 I made a nosegay, bound in such a way
 That the same hues, which in their natural bowers
 Were mingled or opposed, the like array
 Kept these imprisoned children of the Hours
 Within my hand,—and then, elate and gay,
 I hastened to the spot whence I had come,
 That I might there present it!—oh! to whom?

HYMN OF APOLLO.

I.

THE sleepless Hours who watch me as I lie,
 Curtained with star-inwoven tapestries,
 From the broad moonlight of the sky,
 Fanning the busy dreams from my dim eyes,—

Waken me when their Mother, the grey Dawn,
Tells them that dreams and that the moon is gone.

II.

Then I arise, and climbing Heaven's blue dome,
I walk over the mountains and the waves,
Leaving my robe upon the ocean foam;
My footsteps pave the clouds with fire; the caves
Are filled with my bright presence, and the air
Leaves the green earth to my embraces bare.

III.

The sunbeams are my shafts, with which I kill
Deceit, that loves the night and fears the day;
All men who do or even imagine ill
Fly me, and from the glory of my ray
Good minds and open actions take new might,
Until diminished by the reign of night.

IV.

I feed the clouds, the rainbows and the flowers
With their ætherial colours; the Moon's globe
And the pure stars in their eternal bowers
Are circured with my power as with a robe;
Whatever lamps on Earth or Heaven may shine,
Are portions of one power, which is mine.

V.

I stand at noon upon the peak of Heaven,
Then with unwilling steps I wander down
Into the clouds of the Atlantic even;
For grief that I depart they weep and frown:
What look is more delightful than the smile
With which I soothe them from the western isle?

VI.

I am the eye with which the Universe
Beholds itself and knows itself divine;
All harmony of instrument or verse,
All prophecy, all medicine are mine,
All light of art or nature;—to my song,
Victory and praise in their own right belong.

HYMN OF PAN.

I.

FROM the forests and highlands
 We come, we come;
From the river-girt islands,
 Where loud waves are dumb
 Listening to my sweet pipings.
The wind in the reeds and the rushes,
 The bees on the bells of thyme,
The birds on the myrtle bushes,
 The cicale above in the lime,
And the lizards below in the grass,
Were as silent as ever old Tmolus was,
 Listening to my sweet pipings.

II.

Liquid Peneus was flowing,
 And all dark Tempe lay
In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing
 The light of the dying day,
 SPEEDED by my sweet pipings.
The Sileni, and Sylvans, and Fauns,
 And the Nymphs of the woods and waves,
To the edge of the moist river-lawns,
 And the brink of the dewy caves,
And all that did then attend and follow
Were silent with love, as you now, Apollo,
 With envy of my sweet pipings.

III.

I sang of the dancing stars,
 I sang of the dædal Earth,
And of Heaven—and the giant wars,
 And Love, and Death, and Birth,—
 And then I changed my pipings,—
Singing how down the vale of Menalus
 I pursued a maiden and clasped a reed:
Gods and men, we are all deluded thus!
 It breaks in our bosom and then we bleed:

All wept, as I think both ye now would,
 If envy or age had not frozen your blood,
 At the sorrow of my sweet pipings.

TO ———

I.

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden,
 Thou needest not fear mine;
 My spirit is too deeply laden
 Ever to burthen thine.

II.

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion,
 Thou needest not fear mine;
 Innocent is the heart's devotion
 With which I worship thine.

THE TWO SPIRITS: AN ALLEGORY.

FIRST SPIRIT.

O THOU, who plumed with strong desire
 Wouldst float above the earth, beware!
 A Shadow tracks thy flight of fire—
 Night is coming!

Bright are the regions of the air,
 And among the winds and beams
 It were delight to wander there—
 Night is coming!

5

SECOND SPIRIT.

The deathless stars are bright above;
 If I would cross the shade of night,
 Within my heart is the lamp of love,
 And that is day!

10

And the moon will smile with gentle light
 On my golden plumes where'er they move;
 The meteors will linger round my flight,
 And make night day.

15

FIRST SPIRIT.

But if the whirlwinds of darkness waken

Hail, and lightning, and stormy rain;
See, the bounds of the air are shaken—

Night is coming! 20

The red swift clouds of the hurricane
Yon declining sun have overtaken,

The clash of the hail sweeps over the plain—
Night is coming!

SECOND SPIRIT.

I see the light, and I hear the sound; 25

I'll sail on the flood of the tempest dark,
With the calm within and the light around

Which makes night day:

And thou, when the gloom is deep and stark,
Look from thy dull earth, slumber-bound, 30

My moon-like flight thou then may'st mark
On high, far away.

Some say there is a precipice

Where one vast pine is frozen to ruin
O'er piles of snow and chasms of ice 35

'Mid Alpine mountains;

And that the languid storm pursuing
That wingèd shape, for ever flies

Round those hoar branches, aye renewing
Its æry fountains. 40

Some say when nights are dry and clear,

And the death-dews sleep on the morass,
Sweet whispers are heard by the traveller,

Which make night day:

And a silver shape like his early love doth pass
Upborne by her wild and glittering hair, 46

And when he awakes on the fragrant grass
He finds night day.

SONG OF PROSERPINE,

WHILE GATHERING FLOWERS ON THE PLAIN OF ENNA.

I.

SACRED Goddess, Mother Earth,
 Thou from whose immortal bosom,
 Gods, and men, and beasts have birth,
 Leaf and blade, and bud and blossom,
 Breathe thine influence most divine
 On thine own child, Proserpine.

II.

If with mists of evening dew
 Thou dost nourish these young flowers
 Till they grow, in scent and hue,
 Fairest children of the hours,
 Breathe thine influence most divine
 On thine own child, Proserpine.

SUMMER AND WINTER.

It was a bright and cheerful afternoon,
 Towards the end of the sunny month of June,
 When the north wind congregates in crowds
 The floating mountains of the silver clouds
 From the horizon—and the stainless sky 5
 Opens beyond them like eternity.
 All things rejoiced beneath the sun; the weeds,
 The river, and the corn-fields, and the reeds;
 The willow leaves that glanced in the light breeze,
 And the firm foliage of the larger trees. 10

It was a winter such as when birds die
 In the deep forests; and the fishes lie
 Stiffened in the translucent ice, which makes
 Even the mud and slime of the warm lakes
 A wrinkled clod as hard as brick; and when, 15
 Among their children, comfortable men
 Gather about great fires, and yet feel cold:
 Alas then for the homeless beggar old!

LINES TO A REVIEWER.

ALAS, good friend, what profit can you see
 In hating such a hateless thing as me?
 There is no sport in hate when all the rage
 Is on one side: in vain would you assuage
 Your frowns upon an unresisting smile,
 In which not even contempt lurks to beguile
 Your heart, by some faint sympathy of hate.
 O, conquer what you cannot satiate;
 For to your passion I am far more coy
 Than ever yet was coldest maid or boy
 In winter noon. Of your antipathy,
 If I am the Narcissus, you are free
 To pine into a sound with hating me.

FRAGMENT OF A SATIRE ON SATIRE.

IF gibbets, axes, confiscations, chains,
 And racks of subtle torture, if the pains
 Of shame, of fiery Hell's tempestuous wave,
 Seen through the caverns of the shadowy grave,
 Hurling the damned into the murky air 5
 While the meek blest sit smiling; if Despair
 And Hate, the rapid bloodhounds with which Terror
 Hunts through the world the homeless steps of Error,
 Are the true secrets of the commonweal
 To make men wise and just; . . . 10
 And not the sophisms of revenge and fear,
 Bloodier than is revenge . . .
 Then send the priests to every hearth and home
 To preach the burning wrath which is to come,
 In words like flakes of sulphur, such as thaw 15
 The frozen tears . . .
 If Satire's scourge could wake the slumbering hounds
 Of Conscience, or erase the deeper wounds,
 The leprous scars of callous infamy;
 If it could make the present not to be, 20

Or charm the dark past never to have been,
 Or turn regret to hope; who that has seen
 What Southey is and was, would not exclaim,
 Lash on! be the keen verse dipped in flame;
 Follow his flight with winged words, and urge 25
 The strokes of the inexorable scourge
 Until the heart be naked, till his soul
 See the contagion's spots foul;
 And from the mirror of Truth's sunlike shield,
 From which his Parthian arrow . . . 30
 Flash on his sight the spectres of the past,
 Until his mind's eye paint thereon—
 Let scorn like yawn below,
 And rain on him like flakes of fiery snow.
 This cannot be, it ought not, evil still— 35
 Suffering makes suffering, ill must follow ill.
 Rough words beget sad thoughts, and, beside,
 Men take a sullen and a stupid pride
 In being all they hate in others' shame,
 By a perverse antipathy of fame. 40
 'Tis not worth while to prove, as I could, how
 From the sweet fountains of our Nature flow
 These bitter waters; I will only say,
 If any friend would take Southey some day,
 And tell him, in a country walk alone, 45
 Softening harsh words with friendship's gentle tone,
 How incorrect his public conduct is,
 And what men think of it, 'twere not amiss.
 Far better than to make innocent ink——

ODE TO NAPLES.¹EPODE I. *a.*

I STOOD within the city disinterred;²
 And heard the autumnal leaves like light footfalls

¹ The Author has connected many recollections of his visit to Pompeii and Baïæ with the enthusiasm excited by the intelligence of the proclamation of a Constitutional Government at Naples. This has given a tinge of picturesque and descriptive imagery to the introductory Epodes which depict these scenes, and some of the majestic feelings permanently connected with the scene of this animating event.

² Pompeii.

Of spirits passing through the streets; and heard
 The Mountain's slumberous voice at intervals
 Thrill through those roofless halls; 5
 The oracular thunder penetrating shook
 The listening soul in my suspended blood;
 I felt that Earth out of her deep heart spoke—
 I felt, but heard not:—through white columns glowed
 The isle-sustaining Ocean-flood, 10
 A plane of light between two Heavens of azure:
 Around me gleamed many a bright sepulchre
 Of whose pure beauty, Time, as if his pleasure
 Were to spare Death, had never made erasure;
 But every living lineament was clear 15
 As in the sculptor's thought; and there
 The wreaths of stony myrtle, ivy and pine,
 Like winter leaves o'ergrown by moulded snow,
 Seemed only not to move and grow
 Because the crystal silence of the air 20
 Weighed on their life; even as the Power divine
 Which then lulled all things, brooded upon mine.

EPODE II. *a.*

Then gentle winds arose
 With many a mingled close
 Of wild Æolian sound and mountain-odour keen; 25
 And where the Baian ocean
 Welters with airlike motion,
 Within, above, around its bowers of starry green,
 Moving the sea-flowers in those purple caves
 Even as the ever stormless atmosphere 30
 Floats o'er the Elysian realm,
 It bore me like an Angel, o'er the waves
 Of sunlight, whose swift pinnacle of dewy air
 No storm can overwhelm;
 I sailed, where ever flows 35
 Under the calm Serene
 A spirit of deep emotion
 From the unknown graves
 Of the dead kings of Melody.¹

¹ Homer and Virgil.

Shadowy Aornos darkened o'er the helm 40
 The horizontal æther; heaven stript bare
 Its depths over Elysium, where the prow
 Made the invisible water white as snow;
 From that Typhæan mount, Inarime

There streamed a sunlight vapour, like the standard
 Of some ætherial host; 45

Whilst from all the coast,

Louder and louder, gathering round, there wandered
 Over the oracular woods and divine sea
 Prophesyings which grew articulate— 50
 They seize me—I must speak them—be they fate!

STROPHE α. 1.

Naples! thou Heart of men which ever pantest
 Naked, beneath the lidless eye of heaven!
 Elysian City which to calm inchantest 54
 The mutinous air and sea: they round thee, even
 As sleep round Love, are driven!

Metropolis of a ruined Paradise
 Long lost, late won, and yet but half regained!
 Bright Altar of the bloodless sacrifice,
 Which armèd Victory offers up unstained 60
 To Love, the flower-enchained!

Thou which wert once, and then didst cease to be,
 Now art, and henceforth ever shalt be, free,
 If Hope, and Truth, and Justice can avail,
 Hail, hail, all hail! 65

STROPHE β. 2.

Thou youngest giant birth
 Which from the groaning earth
 Leap'st, clothed in armour of impenetrable scale!
 Last of the Intercessors!
 Who 'gainst the Crowned Transgressors 70
 Pleadest before God's love! Arrayed in Wisdom's mail,
 Wave thy lightning lance in mirth
 Nor let thy high heart fail,
 Though from their hundred gates the leagued Oppressors,
 With hurried legions move! 75
 Hail, hail, all hail!

ANTISTROPHE *α.*

What though Cimmerian Anarchs dare blaspheme
 Freedom and thee? thy shield is as a mirror
 To make their blind slaves see, and with fierce gleam
 To turn his hungry sword upon the wearer; 80
 A new Actæon's error
 Shall their's have been—devoured by their own hounds
 Be thou like the imperial Basilisk
 Killing thy foe with unapparent wounds!
 Gaze on oppression, till at that dread risk 85
 Aghast she pass from the Earth's disk:
 Fear not, but gaze—for freemen mightier grow,
 And slaves more feeble, gazing on their foe;
 If Hope and Truth and Justice may avail,
 Thou shalt be great—All hail! 90

ANTISTROPHE *β. 2.*

From Freedom's form divine,
 From Nature's inmost shrine,
 Strip every impious gawd, rend Error veil by veil:
 O'er Ruin desolate,
 O'er Falsehood's fallen state, 95
 Sit thou sublime, unawed; be the Destroyer pale!
 And equal laws be thine,
 And winged words let sail,
 Freight with truth even from the throne of God:
 That wealth, surviving fate, 100
 Be thine.—All hail!

ANTISTROPHE *α. γ.*

Didst thou not start to hear Spain's thrilling pæan
 From land to land re-echoed solemnly,
 Till silence became music? From the Ææan¹
 To the cold Alps, eternal Italy 105
 Starts to hear thine! The Sea
 Which paves the desert streets of Venice laughs
 In light and music; widowed Genoa wan
 By moonlight spells ancestral epitaphs,
 Murmuring, where is Doria? fair Milan, 110
 Within whose veins long ran

¹ Ææa, the island of Circe.

The viper's¹ palsying venom, lifts her heel
 To bruise his head. The signal and the seal
 (If Hope and Truth and Justice can avail)
 Art Thou of all these hopes.—O hail! 115

ANTISTROPHE β. γ.

Florence! beneath the sun,
 Of cities fairest one,
 Blushes within her bower for Freedom's expectation:
 From eyes of quenchless hope
 Rome tears the priestly cope, 120
 As ruling once by power, so now by admiration,
 As athlete stript to run
 From a remoter station
 For the high prize lost on Philippi's shore:—
 As then Hope, Truth, and Justice did avail, 125
 So now may Fraud and Wrong! O hail!

EPODE I β.

Hear ye the march as of the Earth-born Forms
 Arrayed against the ever-living Gods?
 The crash and darkness of a thousand storms
 Bursting their inaccessible abodes 130
 Of crags and thunder-clouds?
 See ye the banners blazoned to the day,
 Inwrought with emblems of barbaric pride?
 Dissonant threats kill Silence far away,
 The serene Heaven which wraps our Eden wide 135
 With iron light is dyed,
 The Anarchs of the North lead forth their legions
 Like Chaos o'er creation, uncreating;
 An hundred tribes nourished on strange religions
 And lawless slaveries,—down the ærial regions 140
 Of the white Alps, desolating,
 Famished wolves that bide no waiting,
 Blotting the glowing footsteps of old glory,
 Trampling our columned cities into dust,
 Their dull and savage lust 145
 On Beauty's corse to sickness satiating—

¹ The viper was the armorial device of the Visconti, tyrants of Milan.

They come! The fields they tread look black and hoary
With fire—from their red feet the streams run gory!

EPODE II. 6.

Great Spirit, deepest Love!
Which rulest and dost move 150
All things which live and are, within the Italian shore;
Who spreadest heaven around it,
Whose woods, rocks, waves, surround it;
Who sittest in thy star, o'er Ocean's western floor,
Spirit of beauty! at whose soft command 155
The sunbeams and the showers distil its foison
From the Earth's bosom chill;
O bid those beams be each a blinding brand
Of lightning! bid those showers be dews of poison!
Bid the Earth's plenty kill! 160
Bid thy bright Heaven above,
Whilst light and darkness bound it,
Be their tomb who planned
To make it ours and thine!
Or, with thine harmonizing ardours fill 165
And raise thy sons, as o'er the prone horizon
Thy lamp feeds every twilight wave with fire—
Be man's high hope and unextinct desire,
The instrument to work thy will divine! 169
Then clouds from sunbeams, antelopes from leopards,
And frowns and fears from Thee,
Would not more swiftly flee
Than Celtic wolves from the Ausonian shepherds.—
Whatever, Spirit, from thy starry shrine
Thou yieldest or withholdest, Oh let be 175
This city of thy worship ever free!

LIBERTY.

I.

THE fiery mountains answer each other;
Their thunderings are echoed from zone to zone;
The tempestuous oceans awake one another,

And the ice-rocks are shaken round Winter's throne,
When the clarion of the Typhoon is blown.

II.

From a single cloud the lightning flashes,
Whilst a thousand isles are illumined around,
Earthquake is trampling one city to ashes,
An hundred are shuddering and tottering; the sound
Is bellowing underground.

III.

But keener thy gaze than the lightning's glare,
And swifter thy step than the earthquake's tramp;
Thou deafenest the rage of the ocean; thy stare
Makes blind the volcanoes; the sun's bright lamp
To thine is a fen-fire damp.

IV.

From billow and mountain and exhalation
The sunlight is darted through vapour and blast;
From spirit to spirit, from nation to nation,
From city to hamlet thy dawning is cast,—
And tyrants and slaves are like shadows of night
In the van of the morning light.

GOOD NIGHT.

I.

Good night? ah! no; the hour is ill
Which severs those it should unite;
Let us remain together still,
Then it will be *good* night.

II.

How can I call the lone night good,
Though thy sweet wishes wing its flight?
Be it not said, thought, understood—
Then it will be—*good* night.

III.

To hearts which near each other move
From evening close to morning light,
The night is good; because, my love,
They never *say* good night.

BUONA NOTTE.

I.

"BUONA notte, buona notte!"—Come mai
 La notte sarà buona senza te?
 Non dirmi buona notte,—chè tu sai,
 La notte sà star buona da per sè.

II.

Solinga, scura, cupa, senza speme,
 La notte quando Lilla m'abbandona;
 Pei cuori chi si batton insieme
 Ogni notte, senza dirla, sarà buona.

III.

Come male buona notte si suona
 Con sospiri e parole interrotte!—
 Il modo di aver la notte buona
 E mai non di dir la buona notte.

THE WORLD'S WANDERERS.

I.

TELL me, thou star, whose wings of light
 Speed thee in thy fiery flight,
 In what cavern of the night
 Will thy pinions close now?

II.

Tell me, moon, thou pale and grey
 Pilgrim of heaven's homeless way,
 In what depth of night or day
 Seekest thou repose now?

III.

Weary wind, who wanderest
 Like the world's rejected guest,
 Hast thou still some secret nest
 On the tree or billow?

ORPHEUS.

A.

NOT far from hence. From yonder pointed hill,
 Crowned with a ring of oaks, you may behold
 A dark and barren field, through which there flows,
 Sluggish and black, a deep but narrow stream,
 Which the wind ripples not, and the fair moon 5
 Gazes in vain, and finds no mirror there.
 Follow the herbless banks of that strange brook
 Until you pause beside a darksome pond,
 The fountain of this rivulet, whose gush
 Cannot be seen, hid by a rayless night 10
 That lives beneath the overhanging rock
 That shades the pool—an endless spring of gloom,
 Upon whose edge hovers the tender light,
 Trembling to mingle with its paramour,—
 But, as Syrinx fled Pan, so night flies day, 15
 Or, with most sullen and regardless hate,
 Refuses stern her heaven-born embrace.
 On one side of this jagged and shapeless hill
 There is a cave, from which there eddies up
 A pale mist, like ærial gossamer, 20
 Whose breath destroys all life—awhile it veils
 The rock—then, scattered by the wind, it flies
 Along the stream, or lingers on the clefts,
 Killing the sleepy worms, if aught bide there.
 Upon the beetling edge of that dark rock 25
 There stands a group of cypresses; not such
 As, with a graceful spire and stirring life,
 Pierce the pure heaven of your native vale,
 Whose branches the air plays among, but not
 Disturbs, fearing to spoil their solemn grace; 30
 But blasted and all wearily they stand,
 One to another clinging; their weak boughs
 Sigh as the wind buffets them, and they shake
 Beneath its blasts—a weather-beaten crew!

CHORUS.

What wondrous sound is that, mournful and faint, 35
 But more melodious than the murmuring wind
 Which through the columns of a temple glides?

A.

It is the wandering voice of Orpheus' lyre,
 Borne by the winds; who sigh that their rude king
 Hurries them fast from these air-feeding notes; 40
 But in their speed they bear along with them
 The waning sound, scattering it like dew
 Upon the startled sense.

CHORUS.

Does he still sing?
 Methought he rashly cast away his harp
 When he had lost Eurydice.

A.

Ah no!

45

Awhile he paused.—As a poor hunted stag
 A moment shudders on the fearful brink
 Of a swift stream—the cruel hounds press on
 With deafening yell, the arrows glance and wound,—
 He plunges in: so Orpheus, seized and torn 50
 By the sharp fangs of an insatiate grief,
 Mænad-like waved his lyre in the bright air,
 And wildly shrieked "Where she is, it is dark!"
 And then he struck from forth the strings a sound
 Of deep and fearful melody. Alas! 55
 In times long past, when fair Eurydice
 With her bright eyes sat listening by his side,
 He gently sang of high and heavenly themes.
 As in a brook, fretted with little waves,
 By the light airs of spring—each riplet makes 60
 A many-sided mirror for the sun,
 While it flows musically through green banks,
 Ceaseless and pauseless, ever clear and fresh,
 So flowed his song, reflecting the deep joy
 And tender love that fed those sweetest notes, 65
 The heavenly offspring of ambrosial food.
 But that is past. Returning from drear Hell,
 He chose a lonely seat of unhewn stone,

Blackened with lichens, on a herbless plain.
 Then from the deep and overflowing spring 70
 Of his eternal ever-moving grief
 There rose to Heaven a sound of angry song.
 'Tis as a mighty cataract that parts
 Two sister rocks with waters swift and strong,
 And casts itself with horrid roar and din 75
 Adown a steep; from a perennial source
 It ever flows and falls, and breaks the air
 With loud and fierce, but most harmonious roar,
 And as it falls casts up a vaporous spray
 Which the sun clothes in hues of Iris light. 80
 Thus the tempestuous torrent of his grief
 Is clothed in sweetest sounds and varying words
 Of poesy. Unlike all human works,
 It never slackens, and through every change
 Wisdom and beauty and the power divine 85
 Of mighty poesy together dwell,
 Mingling in sweet accord. As I have seen
 A fierce south blast tear through the darkened sky,
 Driving along a rack of wingèd clouds,
 Which may not pause, but ever hurry on, 90
 As their wild shepherd wills them, while the stars,
 Twinkling and dim, peep from between the plumes.
 Anon the sky is cleared, and the high dome
 Of serene Heaven, starred with fiery flowers,
 Shuts in the shaken earth; or the still moon 95
 Swiftly, yet gracefully, begins her walk,
 Rising all bright behind the eastern hills.
 I talk of moon, and wind, and stars, and not
 Of song; but would I echo his high song,
 Nature must lend me words ne'er used before, 100
 Or I must borrow from her perfect works,
 To picture forth his perfect attributes.
 He does no longer sit upon his throne
 Of rock upon a desert herbless plain,
 For the evergreen and knotted ilexes, 105
 And cypresses that seldom wave their boughs,
 And sea-green olives with their grateful fruit,
 And elms dragging along the twisted vines,

Which drop their berries as they follow fast,
 And blackthorn bushes with their infant race 110
 Of blushing rose blooms; beeches, to lovers dear,
 And weeping willow trees; all swift or slow,
 As their huge boughs or lighter dress permit,
 Have circled in his throne, and Earth herself
 Has sent from her maternal breast a growth 115
 Of starlike flowers and herbs of odour sweet,
 To pave the temple that his poesy
 Has framed, while near his feet grim lions couch,
 And kids, fearless from love, creep near his lair.
 Even the blind worms seem to feel the sound. 120
 The birds are silent, hanging down their heads,
 Perched on the lowest branches of the trees;
 Not even the nightingale intrudes a note
 In rivalry, but all entranced she listens.

FIORDISPINA.

THE season was the childhood of sweet June,
 Whose sunny hours from morning until noon
 Went creeping through the day with silent feet,
 Each with its load of pleasure, slow yet sweet;
 Like the long years of blest Eternity 5
 Never to be developed. Joy to thee,
 Fiordispina and thy Cosimo,
 For thou the wonders of the depth canst know
 Of this unfathomable flood of hours,
 Sparkling beneath the heaven which embowers— 10
 * * * * *
 They were two cousins, almost like to twins,
 Except that from the catalogue of sins
 Nature had rased their love—which could not be
 But by dissevering their nativity.
 And so they grew together like two flowers 15
 Upon one stem, which the same beams and showers
 Lull or awaken in their purple prime,
 Which the same hand will gather—the same clime

Shake with decay. This fair day smiles to see
 All those who love—and who e'er loved like thee, 20
 Fiordispina? Scarcely Cosimo,
 Within whose bosom and whose brain now glow
 The ardours of a vision which obscure
 The very idol of its portraiture.
 He faints, dissolved into a sea of love; 25
 But thou art as a planet sphered above;
 But thou art Love itself—ruling the motion
 Of his subjected spirit: such emotion
 Must end in sin and sorrow, if sweet May
 Had not brought forth this morn—your wedding-day. 30

* * * * *

Lie there; sleep awhile in your own dew,
 Ye faint-eyed children of the Hours,
 Fiordispina said, and threw the flowers
 Which she had from the breathing—

—A table near of polished porphyry. 35
 They seemed to wear a beauty from the eye
 That looked on them—a fragrance from the touch
 Whose warmth checked their life; a light such
 As sleepers wear, lulled by the voice they love,
 which did reprove 40
 The childish pity that she felt for them,
 And a remorse that from their stem
 She had divided such fair shapes made
 A feeling in the which was a shade
 Of gentle beauty on the flowers: there lay 45
 All gems that make the earth's dark bosom gay.
 rods of myrtle-buds and lemon-blooms,
 And that leaf tinted lightly which assumes
 The livery of unremembered snow—
 Violets whose eyes have drunk— 50

* * * * *

Fiordispina and her nurse are now
 Upon the steps of the high portico;
 Under the withered arm of Media
 She flings her glowing arm

* * * * *

step by step and stair by stair, 55
 That withered woman, grey and white and brown—
 More like a trunk by lichens overgrown
 Than anything which once could have been human.
 And ever as she goes the palsied woman

* * * * *

"How slow and painfully you seem to walk, 60
 Poor Media! you tire yourself with talk."

"And well it may,

Fiordispina, dearest—well-a-day!
 You are hastening to a marriage-bed;
 I to the grave!"—"And if my love were dead, 65
 Unless my heart deceives me, I would lie
 Beside him in my shroud as willingly
 As now in the gay night-dress Lilla wrought."

"Fie, child! Let that unseasonable thought
 Not be remembered till it snows in June; 70

Such fancies are a music out of tune
 With the sweet dance your heart must keep to-night.
 What! would you take all beauty and delight
 Back to the Paradise from which you sprung,
 And leave to grosser mortals?— 75

And say, sweet lamb, would you not learn the sweet
 And subtle mystery by which spirits meet?
 Who knows whether the loving game is played,
 When, once of mortal [vesture] disarrayed,
 The naked soul goes wandering here and there 80
 Through the wide deserts of Elysian air?
 The violet dies not till it"—

THE TOWER OF FAMINE.

AMID the desolation of a city,
 Which was the cradle, and is now the grave
 Of an extinguished people; so that pity

Weeps o'er the shipwrecks of oblivion's wave,
 There stands the Tower of Famine. It is built 5
 Upon some prison homes, whose dwellers rave

For bread, and gold, and blood: pain, linked to guilt,
 Agitates the light flame of their hours,
 Until its vital oil is spent or spilt:

There stands the pile, a tower amid the towers 10
 And sacred domes; each marble-ribbèd roof,
 The brazen-gated temples, and the bowers

Of solitary wealth; the tempest-proof
 Pavilions of the dark Italian air,
 Are by its presence dimmed—they stand aloof, 15

And are withdrawn—so that the world is bare,
 As if a spectre wrapt in shapeless terror
 Amid a company of ladies fair

Should glide and glow, till it became a mirror
 Of all their beauty, and their hair and hue, 20
 The life of their sweet eyes, with all its error,
 Should be absorbed, till they to marble grew.

THE WANING MOON.

AND like a dying lady, lean and pale,
 Who totters forth, wrapt in a gauzy veil,
 Out of her chamber, led by the insane
 And feeble wanderings of her fading brain,
 The moon arose up in the murky east,
 A white and shapeless mass.

TO THE MOON.

I.

ART thou pale for weariness
 Of climbing heaven and gazing on the earth,
 Wandering companionless
 Among the stars that have a different birth,—
 And ever changing, like a joyless eye
 That finds no object worth its constancy?

II.

Thou chosen sister of the spirit,
That gazes on thee till in thee it pities . . .

AN ALLEGORY.

I.

A PORTAL as of shadowy adamant
Stands yawning on the highway of the life
Which we all tread, a cavern huge and gaunt;
Around it rages an unceasing strife
Of shadows, like the restless clouds that haunt
The gap of some cleft mountain, lifted high
Into the whirlwinds of the upper sky.

II.

And many pass it by with careless tread,
Not knowing that a shadowy . . .
Tracks every traveller even to where the dead
Wait peacefully for their companion new;
But others, by more curious humour led
Pause to examine,—these are very few,
And they learn little there, except to know
That shadows follow them where'er they go.

TIME LONG PAST.

I.

LIKE the ghost of a dear friend dead
Is Time long past.
A tone which is now forever fled,
A hope which is now forever past,
A love so sweet it could not last,
Was Time long past.

II.

There were sweet dreams in the night
Of Time long past:
And, was it sadness or delight,
Each day a shadow onward cast

Which made us wish it yet might last—
That Time long past.

III.

There is regret, almost remorse,
For Time long past.
'Tis like a child's beloved corse
A father watches, till at last
Beauty is like remembrance, cast
From Time long past.

SONNET.

YE hasten to the grave! What seek ye there,
Ye restless thoughts and busy purposes
Of the idle brain, which the world's livery wear?
O thou quick heart which pantest to possess
All that pale expectation feigneth fair!
Thou vainly curious mind which wouldst guess
Whence thou didst come, and whither thou must go,
And all that never yet was known wouldst know—
Oh, whither hasten ye, that thus ye press,
With such swift feet life's green and pleasant path,
Seeking, alike from happiness and woe,
A refuge in the cavern of grey death?
O heart, and mind, and thoughts, what thing do you
Hope to inherit in the grave below?

FRAGMENT: THE DESARTS OF SLEEP.

I WENT into the desarts of dim sleep—
That world which, like an unknown wilderness,
Bounds this with its recesses wide and deep.

FRAGMENT: CONSEQUENCE.

THE viewless and invisible Consequence
Watches thy goings-out, and comings-in,

FRAGMENT: UNRISEN SPLENDOUR.

UNRISEN splendour of the brightest sun,
To rise upon our darkness, if the star
Now beckoning thee out of thy misty throne
Could thaw the clouds which wage an obscure war
With thy young brightness!

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1821.

DIRGE FOR THE YEAR.

I.

ORPHAN hours, the year is dead,
Come and sigh, come and weep!
Merry hours, smile instead,
For the year is but asleep.
See, it smiles as it is sleeping,
Mocking your untimely weeping.

II.

As an earthquake rocks a corse
In its coffin in the clay,
So White Winter, that rough nurse,
Rocks the death-cold year to-day;
Solemn hours! wail aloud
For your mother in her shroud.

III.

As the wild air stirs and sways
The tree-swung cradle of a child,
So the breath of these rude days
Rocks the year:—be calm and mild,
Trembling hours, she will arise
With new love within her eyes.

IV.

January grey is here,
Like a sexton by her grave;

February bears the bier,
 March with grief doth howl and rave,
 And April weeps—but, O, ye hours,
 Follow with May's fairest flowers.

TO NIGHT.

I.

SWIFTLY walk over the western wave,
 Spirit of Night!
 Out of the misty eastern cave,
 Where all the long and lone daylight,
 Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
 Which make thee terrible and dear,—
 Swift be thy flight!

II.

Wrap thy form in a mantle grey,
 Star-inwrought!
 Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day;
 Kiss her until she be wearied out,
 Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
 Touching all with thine opiate wand—
 Come, long sought!

III.

When I arose and saw the dawn,
 I sighed for thee;
 When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
 And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
 And the weary Day turned to his rest,
 Lingering like an unloved guest,
 I sighed for thee.

IV.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
 Wouldst thou me?
 Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
 Murmured like a noon-tide bee,
 Shall I nestle near thy side?
 Wouldst thou me?—And I replied,
 No, not thee!

V.

Death will come when thou art dead,
 Soon, too soon—
 Sleep will come when thou art fled;
 Of neither would I ask the boon
 I ask of thee, belovèd Night—
 Swift be thine approaching flight,
 Come soon, soon!

FROM THE ARABIC. AN IMITATION.

I.

My faint spirit was sitting in the light
 Of thy looks, my love;
 It panted for thee like the hind at noon
 For the brooks, my love.
 Thy barb whose hoofs outspeed the tempest's flight
 Bore thee far from me;
 My heart, for my weak feet were weary soon,
 Did companion thee.

II.

Ah! fleeter far than fleetest storm or steed,
 Or the death they bear,
 The heart which tender thought clothes like a dove
 With the wings of care;
 In the battle, in the darkness, in the need,
 Shall mine cling to thee,
 Nor claim one smile for all the comfort, love,
 It may bring to thee.

TO EMILIA VIVIANI.

MADONNA, wherefore hast thou sent to me
 Sweet basil and mignonette?
 Embleming love and health, which never yet
 In the same wreath might be.
 Alas, and they are wet!

Is it with thy kisses or thy tears?
 For never rain or dew
 Such fragrance drew
 From plant or flower—the very doubt endears
 My sadness ever new,
 The sighs I breathe, the tears I shed for thee.
 Send the stars light, but send not love to me,
 In whom love ever made
 Health like a heap of embers soon to fade.

TIME.

UNFATHOMABLE Sea! whose waves are years,
 Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe
 Are brackish with the salt of human tears!
 Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb and flow
 Claspest the limits of mortality!
 And sick of prey, yet howling on for more,
 Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable shore;
 Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
 Who shall put forth on thee,
 Unfathomable Sea?

LINES.

I.

FAR, far away, O ye
 Halcyons of memory,
 Seek some far calmer nest
 Than this abandoned breast;—
 No news of your false spring
 To my heart's winter bring,
 Once having gone, in vain
 Ye come again.

II.

Vultures, who build your bowers
 High in the Future's towers,

Withered hopes on hopes are spread,
Dying joys choked by the dead,
Will serve your beaks for prey
Many a day.

THE FUGITIVES.

I.

THE waters are flashing,
The white hail is dashing,
The lightnings are glancing,
The hoar-spray is dancing—
Away!

The whirlwind is rolling,
The thunder is tolling,
The forest is swinging,
The minster bells ringing—
Come away!

The Earth is like Ocean,
Wreck-strewn and in motion:
Bird, beast, man and worm
Have crept out of the storm—
Come away!

II.

“Our boat has one sail,
And the helmsman is pale;—
A bold pilot I trow,
Who should follow us now,”—
Shouted He—

And she cried: “Ply the oar!
Put off gaily from shore!”—
As she spoke, bolts of death
Mixed with hail, specked their path
O'er the sea.

And from isle, tower and rock,
The blue beacon cloud broke,

And though dumb in the blast,
The red cannon flashed fast
From the lee.

III.

“And fear’st thou, and fear’st thou?
And see’st thou, and hear’st thou?
And drive we not free
O’er the terrible sea,
I and thou?”

One boat-cloak did cover
The loved and the lover—
Their blood beats one measure,
They murmur proud pleasure
Soft and low;—

While around the lashed Ocean,
Like mountains in motion,
Is withdrawn and uplifted,
Sunk, shattered and shifted
To and fro.

IV.

In the court of the fortress
Beside the pale portress,
Like a blood-hound well beaten,
The bridegroom stands, eaten
By shame;

On the topmost watch-turret,
As a death-boding spirit,
Stands the grey tyrant father,
To his voice the mad weather
Seems tame;

And with curses as wild
As e’er clung to child,
He devotes to the blast,
The best, loveliest and last
Of his name!

TO ———.

MUSIC, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.
Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone
Love itself shall slumber on.

SONG.

I.

RARELY, rarely, comest thou,
Spirit of Delight!
Wherefore hast thou left me now
Many a day and night?
Many a weary night and day
'Tis since thou art fled away.

II.

How shall ever one like me
Win thee back again?
With the joyous and the free
Thou wilt scoff at pain.
Spirit false! thou hast forgot
All but those who need thee not.

III.

As a lizard with the shade
Of a trembling leaf,
Thou with sorrow art dismayed;
Even the sighs of grief—
Reproach thee, that thou art not near,
And reproach thou wilt not hear.

IV.

Let me set my mournful ditty
To a merry measure,

Thou wilt never come for pity,
Thou wilt come for pleasure.
Pity then will cut away
Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.

V.

I love all that thou lovest,
Spirit of Delight!
The fresh Earth in new leaves drest,
And the starry night;
Autumn evening, and the morn
When the golden mists are born.

VI.

I love snow, and all the forms
Of the radiant frost;
I love waves, and winds, and storms,
Every thing almost
Which is Nature's, and may be
Untainted by man's misery.

VII.

I love tranquil solitude,
And such society
As is quiet, wise and good;
Between thee and me
What difference? but thou dost possess
The things I seek, not love them less.

VIII.

I love Love—though he has wings,
And like light can flee,
But above all other things,
Spirit, I love thee—
Thou art love and life! O come,
Make once more my heart thy home.

MUTABILITY.

I.

THE flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow dies;

All that we wish to stay
 Tempts and then flies.
 What is this world's delight?
 Lightning that mocks the night,
 Brief even as bright.

II.

Virtue, how frail it is!
 Friendship how rare!
 Love, how it sells poor bliss
 For proud despair!
 But we, though soon they fall,
 Survive their joy, and all
 Which ours we call.

III.

Whilst skies are blue and bright,
 Whilst flowers are gay,
 Whilst eyes that change ere night
 Make glad the day;
 Whilst yet the calm hours creep,
 Dream thou—and from thy sleep
 Then wake to weep.

SONNET. POLITICAL GREATNESS.

NOR happiness, nor majesty, nor fame,
 Nor peace, nor strength, nor skill in arms or arts,
 Shepherd those herds whom tyranny makes tame;
 Verse echoes not one beating of their hearts,
 History is but the shadow of their shame,
 Art veils her glass, or from the pageant starts
 As to oblivion their blind millions fleet,
 Staining that Heaven with obscene imagery
 Of their own likeness. What are numbers knit
 By force or custom? Man who man would be,
 Must rule the empire of himself; in it
 Must be supreme, establishing his throne
 On vanquished will, quelling the anarchy
 Of hopes and fears, being himself alone.

THE AZIOLA.

I.

"Do you not hear the Aziola cry?
Methinks she must be nigh,"
Said Mary, as we sate
In dusk, ere stars were lit, or candles brought;
And I, who thought
This Aziola was some tedious woman,
Asked, "Who is Aziola?" How elate
I felt to know that it was nothing human,
No mockery of myself to fear or hate:
And Mary saw my soul,
And laughed, and said, "Disquiet yourself not;
'Tis nothing but a little downy owl."

II.

Sad Aziola! many an eventide
Thy music I had heard
By wood and stream, meadow and mountain side,
And fields and marshes wide,
Such as nor voice, nor lute, nor wind, nor bird,
The soul ever stirred;
Unlike and far sweeter than them all.
Sad Aziola! from that moment I
Loved thee and thy sad cry.

A LAMENT.

I.

OH, world! oh, life! oh, time!
On whose last steps I climb
Trembling at that where I had stood before;
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more—O, never more!

II.

Out of the day and night
A joy has taken flight;
Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar,
Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
No more—O, never more!

REMEMBRANCE.

I.

SWIFTER far than summer's flight—
 Swifter far than youth's delight—
 Swifter far than happy night,

 Art thou come and gone—
 As the wood when leaves are shed,
 As the night when sleep is fled,
 As the heart when joy is dead,
 I am left lone, alone.

II.

The swallow summer comes again—
 The owl night resumes his reign—
 But the wild-swan youth is fain

 To fly with thee, false as thou.—
 My heart each day desires the morrow;
 Sleep itself is turned to sorrow;
 Vainly would my winter borrow
 Sunny leaves from any bough.

III.

Lilies for a bridal bed—
 Roses for a matron's head—
 Violets for a maiden dead—

 Pansies let *my* flowers be:
 On the living grave I bear
 Scatter them without a tear—
 Let no friend, however dear,
 Waste one hope, one fear for me.

TO EDWARD WILLIAMS.

I.

THE serpent is shut out from paradise.
 The wounded deer must seek the herb no more
 In which its heart-cure lies:
 The widowed dove must cease to haunt a bower

Like that from which its mate with feigned sighs
Fled in the April hour.

I too must seldom seek again
Near happy friends a mitigated pain.

II.

Of hatred I am proud,—with scorn content;
Indifference, that once hurt me, now is grown
Itself indifferent.

But, not to speak of love, pity alone
Can break a spirit already more than bent.

The miserable one
Turns the mind's poison into food,—
Its medicine is tears,—its evil good.

III.

Therefore, if now I see you seldomer,
Dear friends, dear *friend!* know that I only fly
Your looks, because they stir
Griefs that should sleep, and hopes that cannot die:
The very comfort that they minister
I scarce can bear, yet I,
So deeply is the arrow gone,
Should quickly perish if it were withdrawn.

IV.

When I return to my cold home, you ask
Why I am not as I have ever been.
You spoil me for the task
Of acting a forced part in life's dull scene,—
Of wearing on my brow the idle mask
Of author, great or mean,
In the world's carnival. I sought
Peace thus, and but in you I found it not.

V.

Full half an hour, to-day, I tried my lot
With various flowers, and every one still said,
"She loves me——loves me not."
And if this meant a vision long since fled—
If it meant fortune, fame, or peace of thought—
If it meant,—but I dread
To speak what you may know too well:
Still there was truth in the sad oracle.

VI.

The crane o'er seas and forests seeks her home;
 No bird so wild but has its quiet nest,
 When it no more would roam;
 The sleepless billows on the ocean's breast
 Break like a bursting heart, and die in foam,
 And thus at length find rest.
 Doubtless there is a place of peace
 Where *my* weak heart and all its throbs will cease.

VII.

I asked her, yesterday, if she believed
 That I had resolution. One who *had*
 Would ne'er have thus relieved
 His heart with words,—but what his judgment bade
 Would do, and leave the scorner unrelieved.
 These verses are too sad
 To send to you, but that I know,
 Happy yourself, you feel another's woe.

TO-MORROW.

I.

WHERE art thou, beloved To-morrow?
 When young and old and strong and weak,
 Rich and poor, through joy and sorrow,
 Thy sweet smiles we ever seek,—
 In thy place—ah! well-a-day!
 We find the thing we fled—To-day.

II.

If I walk in Autumn's even
 While the dead leaves pass,
 If I look on Spring's soft heaven,—
 Something is not there which was.
 Winter's wondrous frost and snow,
 Summer's clouds, where are they now?

TO ———.

I.

ONE word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdained
For thee to disdain it.
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother,
And pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

II.

I can give not what men call love,
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not,
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

TO ———.

I.

WHEN passion's trance is overpast,
If tenderness and truth could last
Or live, whilst all wild feelings keep
Some mortal slumber, dark and deep,
I should not weep, I should not weep!

II.

It were enough to feel, to see,
Thy soft eyes gazing tenderly,
And dream the rest—and burn and be
The secret food of fires unseen,
Couldst thou but be as thou hast been.

III.

After the slumber of the year
The woodland violets re-appear,

All things revive in field or grove,
 And sky and sea, but two, which move,
 And form all others, life and love.

A BRIDAL SONG.

I.

THE golden gates of Sleep unbar
 Where Strength and Beauty met together,
 Kindle their image like a star
 In a sea of glassy weather.
 Night, with all thy stars look down,—
 Darkness, weep thy holiest dew,—
 Never smiled the inconstant moon
 On a pair so true.
 Let eyes not see their own delight;—
 Haste, swift Hour, and thy flight
 Oft renew.

II.

Fairies, sprites; and angels keep her!
 Holy stars, permit no wrong!
 And return to wake the sleeper,
 Dawn,—ere it be long!
 Oh joy! oh fear! what will be done
 In the absence of the sun!
 Come along!

EPITHALAMIUM.

NIGHT, with all thine eyes look down!
 Darkness shed its holiest dew!
 When ever smiled the inconstant moon
 On a pair so true?
 Hence, coy hour! and quench thy light,
 Lest eyes see their own delight!
 Hence, swift hour! and thy loved flight
 Oft renew.

BOYS.

Oh joy! oh fear! what may be done
In the absence of the sun?

10

Come along!

The golden gates of sleep unbar!

When strength and beauty meet together,
Kindles their image like a star

In a sea of glassy weather.

15

Hence, coy hour! and quench thy light,
Lest eyes see their own delight!

Hence, swift hour! and thy loved flight
Oft renew.

GIRLS.

Oh joy! oh fear! what may be done
In the absence of the sun?

20

Come along!

Fairies! sprites! and angels keep her!

Holiest powers, permit no wrong!

And return, to wake the sleeper,

25

Dawn, ere it be long.

Hence, swift hour! and quench thy light,
Lest eyes see their own delight!

Hence, coy hour! and thy loved flight
Oft renew.

30

BOYS AND GIRLS.

Oh joy! oh fear! what will be done
In the absence of the sun?

Come along!

ANOTHER VERSION.

BOYS SING.

NIGHT! with all thine eyes look down!

Darkness! weep thy holiest dew!

Never smiled the inconstant moon

On a pair so true.

Haste, coy hour! and quench all light,
Lest eyes see their own delight!

5

Haste, swift hour! and thy loved flight
Oft renew!

GIRLS SING.

Fairies, sprites, and angels, keep her!

Holy stars! permit no wrong! 10

And return to wake the sleeper,

Dawn, ere it be long!

Oh joy! oh fear! there is not one

Of us can guess what may be done

In the absence of the sun:— 15

Come along!

BOYS.

Oh! linger long, thou envious eastern lamp

In the damp

Caves of the deep!

GIRLS.

Nay, return, Vesper! urge thy lazy car! 20

Swift unbar

The gates of Sleep!

CHORUS.

The golden gate of Sleep unbar,

When Strength and Beauty, met together,

Kindle their image, like a star 25

In a sea of glassy weather.

May the purple mist of love

Round them rise, and with them move,

Nourishing each tender gem

Which, like flowers, will burst from them. 30

As the fruit is to the tree

May their children ever be!

LOVE, HOPE, DESIRE, AND FEAR.

* * * * *

AND many there were hurt by that strong boy,

His name, they said, was Pleasure,

And near him stood, glorious beyond measure,

Four Ladies who possess all empery

In earth and air and sea, 5

Nothing that lives from their award is free.

Their names will I declare to thee,

Love, Hope, Desire, and Fear,
And they the regents are
Of the four elements that frame the heart, 10
And each diversely exercised her art
By force or circumstance or sleight
To prove her dreadful might
Upon that poor domain.
Desire presented her [false] glass, and then 15
The spirit dwelling there
Was spell-bound to embrace what seemed so fair
Within that magic mirror,
And dazed by that bright error,
It would have scorned the [shafts] of the avenger, 20
And death, and penitence, and danger,
Had not then silent Fear
Touched with her palsying spear,
So that as if a frozen torrent
The blood was curdled in its current; 25
It dared not speak, even in look or motion,
But chained within itself its proud devotion.
Between Desire and Fear thou wert
A wretched thing, poor heart!
Sad was his life who bore thee in his breast, 30
Wild bird for that weak nest.
Till Love even from fierce Desire it bought,
And from the very wound of tender thought
Drew solace, and the pity of sweet eyes
Gave strength to bear those gentle agonies, 35
Surmount the loss, the terror, and the sorrow.
Then Hope approached, she who can borrow
For poor to-day, from rich to-morrow,
And Fear withdrew, as night when day
Descends upon the orient ray, 40
And after long and vain endurance
The poor heart woke to her assurance.
—At one birth these four were born
With the world's forgotten morn,
And from Pleasure still they hold 45
All it circles, as of old.
When, as summer lures the swallow,

Pleasure lures the heart to follow—
 O weak heart of little wit!
 The fair hand that wounded it,
 Seeking, like a panting hare,
 Refuge in the lynx's lair,
 Love, Desire, Hope, and Fear,
 Ever will be near.

50

PROLOGUE TO HELLAS.

HERALD OF ETERNITY.

It is the day when all the sons of God
 Wait in the roofless senate-house, whose floor
 Is Chaos, and the immovable abyss
 Frozen by his steadfast word to hyaline

* * * * *

The shadow of God, and delegate
 Of that before whose breath the universe
 Is as a print of dew.

5

Hierarchs and kings

Who from yon thrones pinnaced on the past
 Sway the reluctant present, ye who sit
 Pavilioned on the radiance or the gloom
 Of mortal thought, which like an exhalation
 Steaming from earth, conceals the of heaven
 Which gave it birth, assemble here
 Before your Father's throne; the swift decree
 Yet hovers, and the fiery incarnation
 Is yet withheld, clothèd in which it shall
 annul

10

15

The fairest of those wandering isles that gem
 The sapphire space of interstellar air,
 That green and azure sphere, that earth inwraught
 Less in the beauty of its tender light
 Than in an atmosphere of living spirit
 Which interpenetrating all the . . .

20

it rolls from realm to realm

And age to age, and in its ebb and flow
 Impels the generations

25

To their appointed place,
 Whilst the high Arbiter
 Beholds the strife, and at the appointed time
 Sends his decrees veiled in eternal. . . 80

Within the circuit of this pendant orb
 There lies an antique region, on which fell
 The dews of thought in the world's golden dawn
 Earliest and most benign, and from it sprung
 Temples and cities and immortal forms 85
 And harmonies of wisdom and of song,
 And thoughts, and deeds worthy of thoughts so fair.
 And when the sun of its dominion failed,
 And when the winter of its glory came,
 The winds that stript it bare blew on and swept 40
 That dew into the utmost wildernesses
 In wandering clouds of sunny rain that thawed
 The unmaternal bosom of the North.
 Haste, sons of God, for ye beheld,
 Reluctant, or consenting, or astonished, 45
 The stern decrees go forth, which heaped on Greece
 Ruin and degradation and despair.
 A fourth now waits: assemble, sons of God,
 To speed or to prevent or to suspend,
 If, as ye dream, such power be not withheld, 50
 The unaccomplished destiny.

* * * * *

CHORUS.

The curtain of the Universe
 Is rent and shattered,
 The splendour-wingèd worlds disperse
 Like wild doves scattered. 55

Space is roofless and bare,
 And in the midst a cloudy shrine,
 Dark amid thrones of light.
 In the blue glow of hyaline
 Golden worlds revolve and shine. 60
 In flight
 From every point of the Infinite,
 Like a thousand dawns on a single night

The splendours rise and spread;
 And through thunder and darkness dread 65
 Light and music are radiated,
 And in their pavilioned chariots led
 By living wings high overhead
 The giant Powers move,
 Gloomy or bright as the thrones they fill. 70

* * * * *

A chaos of light and motion
 Upon that glassy ocean.

* * * * *

The senate of the Gods is met,
 Each in his rank and station set;
 There is silence in the spaces— 75
 Lo! Satan, Christ, and Mahomet
 Start from their places!

CHRIST.

Almighty Father!

Low-kneeling at the feet of Destiny

* * * * *

There are two fountains in which spirits weep 80
 When mortals err, Discord and Slavery named,
 And with their bitter dew two Destinies
 Filled each their irrevocable urns; the third,
 Fiercest and mightiest, mingled both, and added
 Chaos and Death, and slow Oblivion's lymph, 85
 And hate and terror, and the poisoned rain

* * * * *

The Aurora of the nations. By this brow
 Whose pores wept tears of blood, by these wide wounds,
 By this imperial crown of agony,
 By infamy and solitude and death, 90
 For this I underwent, and by the pain
 Of pity for those who would for me
 The unremembered joy of a revenge,
 For this I felt—by Plato's sacred light,
 Of which my spirit was a burning morrow— 95
 By Greece and all she cannot cease to be,
 Her quenchless words, sparks of immortal truth,
 Stars of all night—her harmonies and forms,

Echoes and shadows of what Love adores
 In thee, I do compel thee, send forth Fate, 100
 Thy irrevocable child: let her descend
 A seraph-wingèd victory [arrayed]
 In tempest of the omnipotence of God
 Which sweeps through all things.

From hollow leagues, from Tyranny which arms 105
 Adverse miscreeds and emulous anarchies
 To stamp, as on a wingèd serpent's seed,
 Upon the name of Freedom; from the storm
 Of faction, which like earthquake shakes and sickens
 The solid heart of enterprise; from all 110
 By which the holiest dreams of highest spirits
 Are stars beneath the dawn . . .

She shall arise

Victorious as the world arose from Chaos!
 And as the Heavens and the Earth arrayed
 Their presence in the beauty and the light 115
 Of thy first smile, O Father, as they gather
 The spirit of thy love which paves for them
 Their path o'er the abyss, till every sphere
 Shall be one living Spirit, so shall Greece—

SATAN.

Be as all things beneath the empyrean, 120
 Mine! Art thou eyeless like old Destiny,
 Thou mockery-king, crowned with a wreath of thorns?
 Whose sceptre is a reed, the broken reed
 Which pierces thee! whose throne a chair of scorn;
 For seest thou not beneath this crystal floor 125
 The innumerable worlds of golden light
 Which are my empire, and the least of them

which thou would'st redeem from me?

Know'st thou not them my portion?
 Or wouldst rekindle the strife 130
 Which our great Father then did arbitrate
 When he assigned to his competing sons
 Each his apportioned realm?

Thou Destiny,

Thou who art mailed in the omnipotence

Of Him who sends thee forth, whate'er thy task, 135
 Speed, spare not to accomplish, and be mine
 Thy trophies, whether Greece again become
 The fountain in the desert whence the earth
 Shall drink of freedom, which shall give it strength
 To suffer, or a gulph of hollow death 140
 To swallow all delight, all life, all hope.
 Go, thou Vicegerent of my will, no less
 Than of the Father's; but lest thou shouldst faint,
 The wingèd hounds, Famine and Pestilence,
 Shall wait on thee, the hundred-forkèd snake 145
 Insatiate Superstition still shall . . .
 The earth behind thy steps, and War shall hover
 Above, and Fraud shall gape below, and Change
 Shall flit before thee on her dragon wings,
 Convulsing and consuming, and I add 150
 Three vials of the tears which dæmons weep
 When virtuous spirits through the gate of Death
 Pass triumphing over the thorns of life,
 Sceptres and crowns, mitres and swords and snares,
 Trampling in scorn, like Him and Socrates. 155
 The first is Anarchy; when Power and Pleasure,
 Glory and science and security,
 On Freedom hang like fruit on the green tree,
 Then pour it forth, and men shall gather ashes.
 The second Tyranny—

CHRIST.

Obdurate spirit! 160
 Thou seest but the Past in the To-come.
 Pride is thy error and thy punishment.
 Boast not thine empire, dream not that thy worlds
 Are more than furnace-sparks or rainbow-drops
 Before the Power that wields and kindles them. 165
 True greatness asks not space, true excellence
 Lives in the Spirit of all things that live,
 Which lends it to the worlds thou callest thine.

* * * *

MAHOMET.

* * * *

Haste thou and fill the waning crescent 169

With beams as keen as those which pierced the shadow
 Of Christian night rolled back upon the West
 When the orient moon of Islam rode in triumph
 From Tmolus to the Acroceraunian snow.

* * * * *

Wake, thou Word

Of God, and from the throne of Destiny 175
 Even to the utmost limit of thy way
 May Triumph

* * * * *

Be thou a curse on them whose creed
 Divides and multiplies the most high God.

FRAGMENTS CONNECTED WITH THE PROLOGUE TO HELLAS.

I.

FAIREST of the Destinies, 180
 Disarray thy dazzling eyes:
 Keener far thy lightnings are
 Than the winged [bolts] thou bearest,
 And the smile thou wearest
 Wraps thee as a star 185
 Is wrapt in light.

II.

Could Arethuse to her forsaken urn
 From Alpheus and the bitter Doris run,
 Or could the morning shafts of purest light
 Again into the quivers of the Sun 190
 Be gathered—could one thought from its wild flight
 Return into the temple of the brain
 Without a change, without a stain,—
 Could aught that is, ever again
 Be what it once has ceased to be, 195
 Greece might again be free!

III.

A star has fallen upon the earth
 'Mid the benighted nations,

A quenchless atom of immortal light,
 A living spark of Night, 200
 A cresset shaken from the constellations.
 Swifter than the thunder fell
 To the heart of Earth, the well
 Where its pulses flow and beat,
 And unextinct in that cold source 205
 Burns, and on course
 Guides the sphere which is its prison,
 Like an angelic spirit pent
 In a form of mortal birth,
 Till, as a spirit half arisen 210
 Shatters its charnel, it has rent,
 In the rapture of its mirth,
 The thin and painted garment of the Earth,
 Ruining its chaos—a fierce breath
 Consuming all its forms of living death. 215

SONG: "I WOULD NOT BE A KING."

I WOULD not be a king—enough
 Of woe it is to love;
 The path to power is steep and rough,
 And tempests reign above.
 I would not climb the imperial throne;
 'Tis built on ice which fortune's sun
 Thaws in the height of noon,
 Then farewell, king, yet were I one
 Care would not come so soon.
 Would he and I were far away
 Keeping flocks on Himalay!

FRAGMENT: PEACE FIRST AND LAST.

THE babe is at peace within the womb,
 The corpse is at rest within the tomb,
 We begin in what we end.

FRAGMENT: WANDERING.

HE wanders, like a day-appearing dream,
Through the dim wildernesses of the mind;
Through desert woods and tracts, which seem
Like ocean, homeless, boundless, unconfined.

GINEVRA.

WILD, pale, and wonder-stricken, even as one
Who staggers forth into the air and sun
From the dark chamber of a mortal fever,
Bewildered, and incapable, and ever
Fancying strange comments in her dizzy brain
Of usual shapes, till the familiar train
Of objects and of persons past like things
Strange as a dreamer's mad imaginings,
Genevra from the nuptial altar went;
The vows to which her lips had sworn assent
Rung in her brain still with a jarring din,
Deafening the lost intelligence within.

And so she moved under the bridal veil,
Which made the paleness of her cheek more pale,
And deepened the faint crimson of her mouth,
And darkened her dark locks, as moonlight doth,—
And of the gold and jewels glittering there
She scarce felt conscious,—but the weary glare
Lay like a chaos of unwelcome light,
Vexing the sense with gorgeous undelight.
A moonbeam in the shadow of a cloud
Was less heavenly fair—her face was bowed,
And as she past, the diamonds in her hair
Were mirrored in the polished marble stair
Which led from the cathedral to the street;
And ever as she went her light fair feet
Erased these images.

The bride-maidens who round her thronging came,
 Some with a sense of self-rebuke and shame,
 Envyng the unenviable; and others 30
 Making the joy which should have been another's
 Their own by gentle sympathy; and some
 Sighing to think of an unhappy home:
 Some few admiring what can ever lure
 Maidens to leave the heaven serene and pure 35
 Of parents' smiles for life's great cheat; a thing
 Bitter to taste, sweet in imagining.

But they are all dispersed—and, lo! she stands
 Looking in idle grief on her white hands,
 Alone within the garden now her own; 40
 And through the sunny air, with jangling tone,
 The music of the merry marriage bells,
 Killing the azure silence, sinks and swells;—
 Absorbed like one within a dream who dreams
 That he is dreaming, until slumber seems 45
 A mockery of itself—when suddenly
 Antonio stood before her, pale as she.
 With agony, with sorrow, and with pride,
 He lifted his wan eyes upon the bride,
 And said—"Is this thy faith?" and then as one 50
 Whose sleeping face is stricken by the sun
 With light like a harsh voice, which bids him rise
 And look upon his day of life with eyes
 Which weep in vain that they can dream no more,
 Ginevra saw her lover, and forbore 55
 To shriek or faint, and checked the stifling blood
 Rushing upon her heart, and unsubdued
 Said—"Friend, if earthly violence or ill,
 Suspicion, doubt, or the tyrannic will
 Of parents, chance, or custom, time or change, 60
 Or circumstance, or terror, or revenge,
 Or wildered looks, or words, or evil speech,
 With all their stings and venom can impeach
 Our love,—we love not:—if the grave which hides
 The victim from the tyrant, and divides 65
 The cheek that whitens from the eyes that dart

Imperious inquisition to the heart
That is another's, could dissever ours,
We love not."—"What! do not the silent hours
Beckon thee to Gherardi's bridal bed? 70
Is not that ring"—a pledge, he would have said,
Of broken vows, but she with patient look
The goldern circle from her finger took,
And said—"Accept this token of my faith,
The pledge of vows to be absolved by death; 75
And I am dead or shall be soon—my knell
Will mix it's music with that merry bell,
Does it not sound as if they sweetly said
'We toll a corpse out of the marriage bed?'
The flowers upon my bridal chamber strewn 80
Will serve unfaded for my bier—so soon
That even the dying violet will not die
Before Ginevra." The strong fantasy
Had made her accents weaker and more weak,
And quenched the crimson life upon her cheek, 85
And glazed her eyes, and spread an atmosphere
Round her, which chilled the burning noon with fear,
Making her but an image of the thought,
Which, like a prophet or a shadow, brought
News of the terrors of the coming time. 90
Like an accuser branded with the crime
He would have cast on a belovèd friend,
Whose dying eyes reproach not to the end
The pale betrayer—he then with vain repentance
Would share, he cannot now avert, the sentence— 95
Antonio stood and would have spoken, when
The compound voice of women and of men
Was heard approaching; he retired, while she
Was led amid the admiring company
Back to the palace,—and her maidens soon 100
Changed her attire for the afternoon,
And left her at her own request to keep
An hour of quiet and rest:—like one asleep
With open eyes and folded hands she lay,
Pale in the light of the declining day. 105

Meanwhile the day sinks fast, the sun is set,
 And in the lighted hall the guests are met;
 The beautiful looked lovelier in the light
 Of love, and admiration, and delight
 Reflected from a thousand hearts and eyes 110
 Kindling a momentary Paradise.
 This crowd is safer than the silent wood,
 Where love's own doubts disturb the solitude;
 On frozen hearts the fiery rain of wine
 Falls, and the dew of music more divine 115
 Tempers the deep emotions of the time
 To spirits cradled in a sunny clime:—
 How many meet, who never yet have met,
 To part too soon, but never to forget.
 How many saw the beauty, power and wit 120
 Of looks and words which ne'er enchanted yet;
 But life's familiar veil was now withdrawn,
 As the world leaps before an earthquake's dawn,
 And unprophetic of the coming hours,
 The matin winds from the expanded flowers, 125
 Scatter their hoarded incense, and awaken
 The earth, until the dewy sleep is shaken
 From every living heart which it possesses,
 Through seas and winds, cities and wildernesses,
 As if the future and the past were all 130
 Treasured i' the instant;—so Gherardi's hall
 Laughed in the mirth of its lord's festival,
 Till some one asked—"Where is the Bride?" And then
 A bride's-maid went,—and ere she came again
 A silence fell upon the guests—a pause 135
 Of expectation, as when beauty awes
 All hearts with its approach, though unbeheld;
 Then wonder, and then fear that wonder quelled;—
 For whispers past from mouth to ear which drew
 The colour from the hearer's cheeks, and flew 140
 Louder and swifter round the company;
 And then Gherardi entered with an eye
 Of ostentatious trouble, and a crowd
 Surrounded him, and some were weeping loud.

They found Ginevra dead! if it be death, 145
 To lie without motion, or pulse, or breath,
 With waxen cheeks, and limbs cold, stiff, and white,
 And open eyes, whose fixed and glassy light
 Mocked at the speculation they had owned.
 If it be death, when there is felt around 150
 A smell of clay, a pale and icy glare,
 And silence, and a sense that lifts the hair
 From the scalp to the ancles, as it were
 Corruption from the spirit passing forth,
 And giving all it shrouded to the earth, 155
 And leaving as swift lightning in its flight
 Ashes, and smoke, and darkness: in our night
 Of thought we know thus much of death,—no more
 Than the unborn dream of our life before
 Their barks are wrecked on its inhospitable shore. 160
 The marriage feast and its solemnity
 Was turned to funeral pomp—the company
 With heavy hearts and looks, broke up; nor they
 Who loved the dead went weeping on their way
 Alone, but sorrow mixed with sad surprise 165
 Loosened the springs of pity in all eyes,
 On which that form, whose fate they weep in vain,
 Will never, thought they, kindle smiles again.
 The lamps which half extinguished in their haste
 Gleamed few and faint o'er the abandoned feast, 170
 Shewed as it were within the vaulted room
 A cloud of sorrow hanging, as if gloom
 Had past out of men's minds into the air.
 Some few yet stood around Gherardi there,
 Friends and relations of the dead,—and he, 175
 A loveless man, accepted torpidly
 The consolation that he wanted not,
 Awe in the place of grief within him wrought.
 Their whispers made the solemn silence seem
 More still—some wept, . . . 180
 Some melted into tears without a sob,
 And some with hearts that might be heard to throb
 Leant on the table, and at intervals
 Shuddered to hear through the deserted halls

And corridors the thrilling shrieks which came 155
 Upon the breeze of night, that shook the flame
 Of every torch and taper as it swept
 From out the chamber where the women kept;—
 Their tears fell on the dear companion cold
 Of pleasures now departed; then was knolled 190
 The bell of death, and soon the priests arrived,
 And finding death their penitent had shrived,
 Returned like ravens from a corpse whereon
 A vulture has just feasted to the bone.
 And then the mourning women came.— 195
 * * * * *

THE DIRGE.

Old winter was gone
 In his weakness back to the mountains hoar,
 And the spring came down
 From the planet that hovers upon the shore
 Where the sea of sunlight encroaches 200
 On the limits of wintry night;—
 If the land, and the air, and the sea,
 Rejoice not when spring approaches,
 We did not rejoice in thee,
 Ginevra! 205

She is still, she is cold
 On the bridal couch,
 One step to the white death-bed,
 And one to the bier,
 And one to the charnel—and one, O where? 210
 The dark arrow fled
 In the noon.

Ere the sun through heaven once more has rolled,
 The rats in her heart
 Will have made their nest, 215
 And the worms be alive in her golden hair,
 While the spirit that guides the sun,
 Sits throned in his flaming chair,
 She shall sleep.

EVENING. PONTE A MARE, PISA.

I.

THE sun is set; the swallows are asleep;
 The bats are flitting fast in the grey air;
 The slow soft toads out of damp corners creep,
 And evening's breath, wandering here and there
 Over the quivering surface of the stream,
 Wakes not one ripple from its summer dream.

II.

There is no dew on the dry grass to-night,
 Nor damp within the shadow of the trees;
 The wind is intermitting, dry, and light;
 And in the inconstant motion of the breeze
 The dust and straws are driven up and down,
 And whirled about the pavement of the town.

III.

Within the surface of the fleeting river
 The wrinkled image of the city lay,
 Immovably unquiet, and for ever
 It trembles, but it never fades away;
 Go to the . . .
 You, being changed, will find it then as now.

IV.

The chasm in which the sun has sunk is shut
 By darkest barriers of cinereous cloud,
 Like mountain over mountain huddled—but
 Growing and moving upwards in a crowd,
 And over it a space of watery blue,
 Which the keen evening star is shining through.

THE BOAT ON THE SERCHIO.

OUR boat is asleep on Serchio's stream,
 Its sails are folded like thoughts in a dream,
 The helm sways idly, hither and thither;
 Dominic, the boat-man, has brought the mast,
 And the oars and the sails; but 'tis sleeping fast, 5
 Like a beast, unconscious of its tether.

The stars burnt out in the pale blue air,
 And the thin white moon lay withering there,
 To tower, and cavern, and rift and tree,
 The owl and the bat fled drowsily. 10

Day had kindled the dewy woods,
 And the rocks above and the stream below,
 And the vapours in their multitudes,
 And the Apennine's shroud of summer snow,
 And clothed with light of æry gold 15
 The mists in their eastern caves uprolled.

Day had awakened all things that be,
 The lark and the thrush and the swallow free,
 And the milkmaid's song and the mower's scythe,
 And the matin-bell and the mountain bee : 20
 Fire-flies were quenched on the dewy corn,
 Glow-worms went out on the river's brim,
 Like lamps which a student forgets to trim :
 The beetle forgot to wind his horn,

The crickets were still in the meadow and hill : 25
 Like a flock of rooks at a farmer's gun
 Night's dreams and terrors, every one,
 Fled from the brains which are their prey
 From the lamp's death to the morning ray.

All rose to do the task He set to each, 30
 Who shaped us to his ends and not our own ;
 The million rose to learn, and one to teach
 What none yet ever knew or can be known.

And many rose
 Whose woe was such that fear became desire ;— 35
 Melchior and Lionel were not among those ;
 They from the throng of men had stepped aside,
 And made their home under the green hill side.
 It was that hill, whose intervening brow

Screens Lucca from the Pisan's envious eye, 40
 Which the circumfluous plain waving below,
 Like a wide lake of green fertility,

With streams and fields and marshes bare,
 Divides from the far Apennines—which lie
 Islanded in the immeasurable air. 45

"What think you, as she lies in her green cove,
 Our little sleeping boat is dreaming of?"
 "If morning dreams are true, why I should guess
 That she was dreaming of our idleness,
 And of the miles of watery way 50
 We should have led her by this time of day."—

"Never mind," said Lionel,
 "Give care to the winds, they can bear it well
 About yon poplar tops; and see
 The white clouds are driving merrily, 55
 And the stars we miss this morn will light
 More willingly our return to-night.—
 How it whistles, Dominic's long black hair!
 List my dear fellow; the breeze blows fair:
 Hear how it sings into the air." 60

"Of us and of our lazy motions,"
 Impatiently said Melchior,
 "If I can guess a boat's emotions;
 And how we ought, two hours before,
 To have been the devil knows where." 65
 And then, in such transalpine Tuscan
 As would have killed a Della-Cruscan,
 * * * * *

So, Lionel according to his art
 Weaving his idle words, Melchior said:
 "She dreams that we are not yet out of bed; 70
 We'll put a soul into her, and a heart
 Which like a dove chased by a dove shall beat."
 * * * * *

"Ay, heave the ballast overboard,
 And stow the eatables in the aft locker."
 "Would not this keg be best a little lowered?" 75
 "No, now all's right." "Those bottles of warm tea—
 (Give me some straw)—must be stowed tenderly;
 Such as we used, in summer after six,
 To cram in great-coat pockets, and to mix
 Hard eggs and radishes and rolls at Eton, 80

And, couched on stolen hay in those green harbours
 Farmers called gaps, and we schoolboys called arbours,
 Would feast till eight."

* * * * *

With a bottle in one hand,
 As if his very soul were at a stand, 85
 Lionel stood—when Melchior brought him steady:—
 "Sit at the helm—fasten this sheet—all ready!"

The chain is loosed, the sails are spread,
 The living breath is fresh behind,
 As with dews and sunrise fed, 90
 Comes the laughing morning wind;—
 The sails are full, the boat makes head
 Against the Serchio's torrent fierce,
 Then flags with intermitting course,
 And hangs upon the wave, and stems 95
 The tempest of the

Which fervid from its mountain source
 Shallow, smooth and strong doth come,—
 Swift as fire, tempestuously
 It sweeps into the affrighted sea; 100
 In morning's smile its eddies coil,
 Its billows sparkle, toss and boil,
 Torturing all its quiet light
 Into columns fierce and bright.

The Serchio, twisting forth 105
 Between the marble barriers which it clove
 At Ripafratta, leads through the dread chasm
 The wave that died the death which lovers love,
 Living in what it sought; as if this spasm
 Had not yet past, the toppling mountains cling, 110
 But the clear stream in full enthusiasm
 Pours itself on the plain, then wandering
 Down one clear path of effluence crystalline,
 Sends its superfluous waves, that they may fling
 At Arno's feet tribute of corn and wine, 115
 Then, through the pestilential deserts wild
 Of tangled marsh and woods of stunted pine,
 It rushes to the Ocean.

MUSIC.

I.

I PANT for the music which is divine,
 My heart in its thirst is a dying flower;
 Pour forth the sound like enchanted wine,
 Loosen the notes in a silver shower;
 Like a herbless plain, for the gentle rain,
 I gasp, I faint, till they wake again.

II.

Let me drink of the spirit of that sweet sound,
 More, O more,—I am thirsting yet,
 It loosens the serpent which care has bound
 Upon my heart to stifle it;
 The dissolving strain, through every vein,
 Passes into my heart and brain.

III.

As the scent of a violet withered up,
 Which grew by the brink of a silver lake;
 When the hot noon has drained its dewy cup,
 And mist there was none its thirst to slake—
 And the violet lay dead while the odour flew
 On the wings of the wind o'er the waters blue—

IV.

As one who drinks from a charmed cup
 Of foaming, and sparkling and murmuring wine,
 Whom, a mighty Enchantress filling up,
 Invites to love with her kiss divine.

SONNET TO BYRON.

[I AM afraid these verses will not please you, but]
 If I esteemed you less, Envy would kill
 Pleasure, and leave to Wonder and Despair
 The ministration of the thoughts that fill
 The mind which, like a worm whose life may share
 A portion of the unapproachable,

Marks your creations rise as fast and fair
 As perfect worlds at the Creator's will.
 But such is my regard that nor your power
 To soar above the heights where others [climb],
 Nor fame, that shadow of the unborn hour
 Cast from the envious future on the time,
 Move one regret for his unhonoured name
 Who dares these words:—the worm beneath the sod
 May lift itself in homage of the God.

TWO FRAGMENTS ON LOVE.

I.

I FAINT, I perish with my love! I grow
 Frail as a cloud whose [splendours] pale
 Under the evening's ever-changing glow:
 I die like mist upon the gale,
 And like a wave under the calm I fail.

II.

Faint with love, the Lady of the South
 Lay in the paradise of Lebanon
 Under a heaven of cedar boughs; the drought
 Of love was on her lips; the light was gone
 Out of her eyes.

FRAGMENT.

COME, thou awakener of the spirit's ocean,
 Zephyr, whom to thy cloud or cave
 No thought can trace! speed with thy gentle motion!

FRAGMENT.

THE gentleness of rain was in the wind

FRAGMENT OF A DREAM.

METHOUGHT I was a billow in the crowd
 Of common men, that stream without a shore,
 That ocean which at once is deaf and loud;
 That I, a man, stood amid many more
 By a wayside . . . , which the aspect bore
 Of some imperial metropolis,
 Where mighty shapes—pyramid, dome, and tower—
 Gleamed like a pile of crags.

FRAGMENT ON KEATS,

WHO DESIRED THAT ON HIS TOMB SHOULD BE INSCRIBED—

“HERE lieth One whose name was writ on water.”
 But, ere the breath that could erase it blew,
 Death, in remorse for that fell slaughter,
 Death, the immortalizing winter, flew
 Athwart the stream,—and time’s printless torrent grew
 A scroll of crystal, blazoning the name
 Of Adonais.—

FRAGMENT: INSECURITY.

WHEN soft winds and sunny skies
 With the green earth harmonize,
 And the young and dewy dawn,
 Bold as an unhunted fawn,
 Up the windless heaven is gone,—
 Laugh—for ambushed in the day,
 Clouds and whirlwinds watch their prey.

COUPLETS.

AND that I walk thus proudly crowned withal
 Is that ’t is my distinction; if I fall,
 I shall not weep out of the vital day,
 To-morrow dust, nor wear a dull decay.

FRAGMENT.

THE rude wind is singing
 The dirge of the music dead,
 The cold worms are clinging
 Where kisses were lately fed.

FRAGMENT OF TERZA RIMA:

FALSE LAURELS AND TRUE.

"WHAT art thou, Presumptuous, who profanest
 The wreath to mighty poets only due,
 Even whilst like a forgotten moon thou wanest?
 Touch not those leaves which for the eternal few
 Who wander o'er the paradise of fame,
 In sacred dedication ever grew:
 One of the crowd thou art without a name."
 "Ah, friend, 'tis the false laurel that I wear;
 Bright though it seem, it is not the same
 As that which bound Milton's immortal hair;
 Its dew is poison and the hopes that quicken
 Under its chilling shade, though seeming fair,
 Are flowers which die almost before they sicken."

TWO FRAGMENTS OF INVOCATION.

I.

GREAT Spirit whom the sea of boundless thought
 Nurtures within its unimagined caves,
 In which thou sittest sole, as in my mind,
 Giving a voice to its mysterious waves.

II.

O thou immortal deity
 Whose throne is in the depth of human thought,
 I do adjure thy power and thee
 By all that man may be, by all that he is not,
 By all that he has been and yet must be!

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1822.

THE ZUCCA.

I.

SUMMER was dead and Autumn was expiring,
 And infant Winter laughed upon the land
 All cloudlessly and cold;—when I, desiring
 More in this world than any understand,
 Wept o'er the beauty, which like sea retiring,
 Had left the earth bare as the wave-worn sand
 Of my lorn heart, and o'er the grass and flowers
 Pale for the falsehood of the flattering Hours.

II.

Summer was dead, but I yet lived to weep
 The instability of all but weeping;
 And on the Earth lulled in her winter sleep
 I woke, and envied her as she was sleeping.
 Too happy Earth! over thy face shall creep
 The wakening vernal airs, until thou, leaping
 From unremembered dreams, shalt see
 No death divide thy immortality.

III.

I loved—O no, I mean not one of ye,
 Or any earthly one, though ye are dear
 As human heart to human heart may be;—
 I loved, I know not what—but this low sphere
 And all that it contains, contains not thee,
 Thou, whom seen nowhere, I feel everywhere.
 From heaven and earth, and all that in them are,
 Veiled art thou, like a star.

IV.

By Heaven and Earth, from all whose shapes thou flowest,
 Neither to be contained, delayed, nor hidden,
 Making divine the loftiest and the lowest,
 When for a moment thou art not forbidden
 To live within the life which thou bestowest;
 And leaving noblest things vacant and chidden,

Cold as a corpse after the spirit's flight,
Blank as the sun after the birth of night.

V.

In winds, and trees, and streams, and all things common,
In music and the sweet unconscious tone
Of animals, and voices which are human,
Meant to express some feelings of their own ;
In the soft motions and rare smile of woman,
In flowers and leaves, and in the grass fresh-shewn,
Or dying in the autumn, I the most
Adore thee present or lament thee lost.

VI.

And thus I went lamenting, when I saw
A plant upon the river's margin lie,
Like one who loved beyond his Nature's law,
And in despair had cast him down to die ;
Its leaves which had outlived the frost, the thaw
Had blighted ; like a heart which hatred's eye
Can blast not, but which pity kills ; the dew
Lay on its spotted leaves like tears too true.

VII.

The Heavens had wept upon it, but the Earth
Had crushed it on her unmaternal breast.

* * * *

VIII.

I bore it to my chamber, and I planted
It in a vase full of the lightest mould ;
The winter beams which out of Heaven slanted
Fell through the window panes, disrobed of cold,
Upon its leaves and flowers ; the star which panted
In evening for the Day, whose car has rolled
Over the horizon's wave, with looks of light
Smiled on it from the threshold of the night.

IX.

The mitigated influences of air
And light revived the plant, and from it grew
Strong leaves and tendrils, and its flowers fair,
Full as a cup with the vine's burning dew,
O'erflowed with golden colours ; an atmosphere
Of vital warmth infolded it anew,

And every impulse sent to every part
The unbeheld pulsations of its heart.

X.

Well might the plant grow beautiful and strong,
Even if the air and sun had smiled not on it;
For one wept o'er it all the winter long
Tears pure as Heaven's rain, which fell upon it
Hour after hour; for sounds of softest song
Mixed with the stringèd melodies that won it
To leave the gentle lips on which it slept,
Had loosed the heart of him who sat and wept.

XI.

Had loosed his heart, and shook the leaves and flowers
On which he wept, the while the savage storm
Waked by the darkest of December's hours
Was raving round the chamber hushed and warm;
The birds were shivering in their leafless bowers,
The fish were frozen in the pools, the form
Of every summer plant was dead...
Whilst this...

* * * * *

THE MAGNETIC LADY TO HER PATIENT.

I.

"SLEEP, sleep on! forget thy pain;
My hand is on thy brow,
My spirit on thy brain;
My pity on thy heart, poor friend;
And from my fingers flow
The powers of life, and like a sign,
Seal thee from thine hour of woe;
And brood on thee, but may not blend
With thine.

II.

"Sleep, sleep on! I love thee not;
But when I think that he
Who made and makes my lot
As full of flowers as thine of weeds,
Might have been lost like thee;

And that a hand which was not mine,
Might then have charmed his agony
As I another's—my heart bleeds
For thine.

III.

"Sleep, sleep, and with the slumber of
The dead and the unborn
Forget thy life and love;
Forget that thou must wake for ever;
Forget the world's dull scorn;
Forget lost health, and the divine
Feelings which died in youth's brief morn;
And forget me, for I can never
Be thine.

IV.

"Like a cloud big with a May shower,
My soul weeps healing rain,
On thee, thou withered flower;
It breathes mute music on thy sleep;
Its odour calms thy brain;
Its light within thy gloomy breast
Spreads like a second youth again.
By mine thy being is to its deep
Possess.

V.

"The spell is done. How feel you now?"
"Better—Quite well," replied
The sleeper.—"What would do
You good when suffering and awake?
What cure your head and side?—"
"What would cure, that would kill me, Jane:
And as I must on earth abide
Awhile, yet tempt me not to break
My chain."

LINES.

I.

WHEN the lamp is shattered
The light in the dust lies dead—

When the cloud is scattered
The rainbow's glory is shed.
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.

II.

As music and splendour
Survive not the lamp and the lute,
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute:—
No song but sad dirges,
Like the wind through a ruined cell,
Or the mournful surges
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

III.

When hearts have once mingled
Love first leaves the well-built nest,
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possest.
O, Love! who bewailest
The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home and your bier?

IV.

Its passions will rock thee
As the storms rock the ravens on high:
Bright reason will mock thee,
Like the sun from a wintry sky.
From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine eagle home
Leave thee naked to laughter,
When leaves fall and cold winds come.

TO JANE—THE INVITATION.

BEST and brightest, come away!
Fairer far than this fair Day,

Which, like thee to those in sorrow,
 Comes to bid a sweet good-morrow
 To the rough Year just awake 5
 In its cradle on the brake.
 The brightest hour of unborn Spring,
 Through the winter wandering,
 Found, it seems, the halcyon Morn
 To hoar February born; 10
 Bending from Heaven, in azure mirth,
 It kissed the forehead of the Earth,
 And smiled upon the silent sea,
 And bade the frozen streams be free,
 And waked to music all their fountains, 15
 And breathed upon the frozen mountains,
 And like a prophetess of May
 Strewed flowers upon the barren way,
 Making the wintry world appear
 Like one on whom thou smilest, dear. 20

Away, away, from men and towns,
 To the wild wood and the downs—
 To the silent wilderness
 Where the soul need not repress
 Its music lest it should not find 25
 An echo in another's mind,
 While the touch of Nature's art
 Harmonizes heart to heart.
 I leave this notice on my door
 For each accustomed visitor:— 30
 "I am gone into the fields
 To take what this sweet hour yields;—
 Reflection, you may come to-morrow,
 Sit by the fireside with Sorrow.—
 You with the unpaid bill, Despair,— 35
 You tiresome verse-reciter, Care,—
 I will pay you in the grave,—
 Death will listen to your stave.
 Expectation too, be off!
 To-day is for itself enough; 40
 Hope in pity mock not Woe

With smiles, nor follow where I go ;
 Long having lived on thy sweet food,
 At length I find one moment's good
 After long pain—with all your love,
 This you never told me of."

Radiant Sister of the Day,
 Awake! arise! and come away!
 To the wild woods and the plains,
 And the pools where winter rains
 Image all their roof of leaves,
 Where the pine its garland weaves
 Of sapless green and ivy dun
 Round stems that never kiss the sun;
 Where the lawns and pastures be,
 And the sandhills of the sea;—
 Where the melting hoar-frost wets
 The daisy-star that never sets,
 And wind-flowers, and violets,
 Which yet join not scent to hue,
 Crown the pale year weak and new;
 When the night is left behind
 In the deep east, dun and blind,
 And the blue noon is over us,
 And the multitudinous
 Billows murmur at our feet,
 Where the earth and ocean meet,
 And all things seem only one
 In the universal sun.

TO JANE—THE RECOLLECTION.

I.

Now the last day of many days,
 All beautiful and bright as thou,
 The loveliest and the last, is dead,
 Rise, Memory, and write its praise!
 Up to thy wonted work! come, trace
 The epitaph of glory fled,—

For now the Earth has changed its face,
A frown is on the Heaven's brow.

II.

We wandered to the Pine Forest
That skirts the Ocean's foam, 10
The lightest wind was in its nest,
The tempest in its home.
The whispering waves were half asleep,
The clouds were gone to play,
And on the bosom of the deep, 15
The smile of Heaven lay;
It seemed as if the hour were one
Sent from beyond the skies,
Which scattered from above the sun
A light of Paradise. 20

III.

We paused amid the pines that stood
The giants of the waste,
Tortured by storms to shapes as rude
As serpents interlaced,
And soothed by every azure breath, 25
That under heaven is blown,
To harmonies and hues beneath,
As tender as its own;
Now all the tree-tops lay asleep,
Like green waves on the sea, 30
As still as in the silent deep
The ocean woods may be.

IV.

How calm it was!—the silence there
By such a chain was bound
That even the busy woodpecker 35
Made stiller by her sound
The inviolable quietness;
The breath of peace we drew
With its soft motion made not less
The calm that round us grew. 40
There seemed from the remotest seat
Of the white mountain waste,

To the soft flower beneath our feet,
 A magic circle traced,—
 A spirit interfused around, 45
 A thrilling silent life,
 To momentary peace it bound
 Our mortal nature's strife ;—
 And still I felt the centre of
 The magic circle there, 50
 Was one fair form that filled with love
 The lifeless atmosphere.

V.

We paused beside the pools that lie
 Under the forest bough,
 Each seemed as 'twere a little sky 55
 Gulphed in a world below ;
 A firmament of purple light,
 Which in the dark earth lay,
 More boundless than the depth of night,
 And purer than the day— 60
 In which the lovely forests grew
 As in the upper air,
 More perfect both in shape and hue
 Than any spreading there.
 There lay the glade and neighbouring lawn, 65
 And through the dark green wood
 The white sun twinkling like the dawn
 Out of a speckled cloud.
 Sweet views which in our world above
 Can never well be seen, 70
 Were imaged by the water's love
 Of that fair forest green.
 And all was interfused beneath
 With an elysian glow,
 An atmosphere without a breath, 75
 A softer day below.
 Like one beloved the scene had lent
 To the dark water's breast,
 Its every leaf and lineament
 With more than truth exprest ; 80
 Until an envious wind crept by,
 Like an unwelcome thought,

Which from the mind's too faithful eye
 Blots one dear image out.
 Though thou art ever fair and kind,
 The forests ever green,
 Less oft is peace in Shelley's mind,
 Than calm in waters seen.

85

WITH A GUITAR, TO JANE.

ARIEL to Miranda.—Take
 This slave of Music, for the sake
 Of him who is the slave of thee,
 And teach it all the harmony
 In which thou canst, and only thou,
 Make the delighted spirit glow,
 Till joy denies itself again,
 And, too intense, is turned to pain;
 For by permission and command
 Of thine own Prince Ferdinand,
 Poor Ariel sends this silent token
 Of more than ever can be spoken;
 Your guardian spirit, Ariel, who,
 From life to life, must still pursue
 Your happiness;—for thus alone
 Can Ariel ever find his own.
 From Prospero's enchanted cell,
 As the mighty verses tell,
 To the throne of Naples, he
 Lit you o'er the trackless sea,
 Flitting on, your prow before,
 Like a living meteor.
 When you die, the silent Moon,
 In her interlunar swoon,
 Is not sadder in her cell
 Than deserted Ariel.
 When you live again on earth,
 Like an unseen star of birth,
 Ariel guides you o'er the sea
 Of life from your nativity.

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10

15

20

25

30

Many changes have been run,
Since Ferdinand and you begun
Your course of love, and Ariel still
Has tracked your steps, and served your will;
Now, in humbler, happier lot, 35
This is all remembered not;
And now, alas! the poor sprite is
Imprisoned, for some fault of his,
In a body like a grave;—
From you he only dares to crave, 40
For his service and his sorrow,
A smile to-day, a song to-morrow.

The artist who this idol wrought,
To echo all harmonious thought,
Felled a tree, while on the steep 45
The woods were in their winter sleep,
Rocked in that repose divine
On the wind-swept Apennine;
And dreaming, some of Autumn past,
And some of Spring approaching fast, 50
And some of April buds and showers,
And some of songs in July bowers,
And all of love; and so this tree,—
O that such our death may be!—
Died in sleep, and felt no pain, 55
To live in happier form again:
From which, beneath Heaven's fairest star,
The artist wrought this loved Guitar,
And taught it justly to reply,
To all who question skilfully, 60
In language gentle as thine own;
Whispering in enamoured tone
Sweet oracles of woods and dells,
And summer winds in sylvan cells;
For it had learnt all harmonies 65
Of the plains and of the skies,
Of the forests and the mountains,
And the many-voicèd fountains;
The clearest echoes of the hills,

The softest notes of falling rills, 70
 The melodies of birds and bees,
 The murmuring of summer seas,
 And pattering rain, and breathing dew,
 And airs of evening; and it knew
 That seldom-heard mysterious sound, 75
 Which, driven on its diurnal round,
 As it floats through boundless day,
 Our world enkindles on its way—
 All this it knows, but will not tell
 To those who cannot question well 80
 The spirit that inhabits it;
 It talks according to the wit
 Of its companions; and no more
 Is heard than has been felt before,
 By those who tempt it to betray 85
 These secrets of an elder day:
 But sweetly as its answers will
 Flatter hands of perfect skill,
 It keeps its highest, holiest tone
 For our belovèd Jane alone. 90

TO JANE.

I.

THE keen stars were twinkling,
 And the fair moon was rising among them,
 Dear Jane!
 The guitar was tinkling,
 But the notes were not sweet till you sung them
 Again.

II.

As the moon's soft splendour
 O'er the faint cold starlight of heaven
 Is thrown,
 So your voice most tender
 To the strings without soul had then given
 Its own.

III.

The stars will awaken,
 Though the moon sleep a full hour later,
 To-night;
 No leaf will be shaken
 Whilst the dews of your melody scatter
 Delight.

IV.

Though the sound overpowers,
 Sing again, with your dear voice revealing
 A tone
 Of some world far from ours,
 Where music and moonlight and feeling
 Are one.

A DIRGE.

ROUGH wind, that moanest loud
 Grief too sad for song;
 Wild wind, when sullen cloud
 Knells all the night long;
 Sad storm, whose tears are vain,
 Bare woods, whose branches stain,
 Deep caves and dreary main,
 Wail, for the world's wrong!

LINES WRITTEN IN THE BAY OF LERICI.

SHE left me at the silent time
 When the moon had ceased to climb
 The azure path of Heaven's steep,
 And like an albatross asleep,
 Balanced on her wings of light,
 Hovered in the purple night,
 Ere she sought her ocean nest
 In the chambers of the West.
 She left me, and I staid alone
 Thinking over every tone

5

16

Which, though silent to the ear,
 The enchanted heart could hear,
 Like notes which die when born, but still
 Haunt the echoes of the hill;
 And feeling ever—O too much!— 15
 The soft vibration of her touch,
 As if her gentle hand, even now,
 Lightly trembled on my brow;
 And thus, although she absent were,
 Memory gave me all of her 20
 That even Fancy dares to claim:—
 Her presence had made weak and tame
 All passions, and I lived alone
 In the time which is our own;
 The past and future were forgot, 25
 As they had been, and would be, not.
 But soon, the guardian angel gone,
 The dæmon reassumed his throne
 In my faint heart. I dare not speak
 My thoughts, but thus disturbed and weak 30
 I sat and saw the vessels glide
 Over the ocean bright and wide,
 Like spirit-wingèd chariots sent
 O'er some serenest element
 For ministrations strange and far; 35
 As if to some Elysian star
 Sailed for drink to medicine
 Such sweet and bitter pain as mine.
 And the wind that winged their flight
 From the land came fresh and light, 40
 And the scent of wingèd flowers,
 And the coolness of the hours
 Of dew, and sweet warmth left by day,
 Were scattered o'er the twinkling bay.
 And the fisher with his lamp 45
 And spear about the low rocks damp
 Crept, and struck the fish which came
 To worship the delusive flame.
 Too happy they, whose pleasure sought
 Extinguishes all sense and thought 50

Of the regret that pleasure leaves,
Destroying life alone, not peace!

THE ISLE.

THERE was a little lawny islet
By anemone and violet,
 Like mosaic, paven :
And its roof was flowers and leaves
Which the summer's breath enweaves,
Where nor sun nor showers nor breeze
Pierce the pines and tallest trees,
 Each a gem engraven.
Girt by many an azure wave
With which the clouds and mountains pave
 A lake's blue chasm.

LINES.

I.

WE meet not as we parted,
We feel more than all may see,
My bosom is heavy-hearted,
And thine full of doubt for me.
One moment has bound the free.

II.

That moment is gone for ever,
Like lightning that flashed and died,
Like a snowflake upon the river,
Like a sunbeam upon the tide,
Which the dark shadows hide.

III.

That moment from time was singled
As the first of a life of pain,
The cup of its joy was mingled
—Delusion too sweet though vain!
Too sweet to be mine again.

IV.

Sweet lips, could my heart have hidden
 That its life was crushed by you,
 Ye would not have then forbidden
 The death which a heart so true
 Sought in your briny dew.

V.

* * * *
 * * * *
 * * * *

Methinks too little cost
 For a moment so found, so lost !

FRAGMENT: TO THE MOON.

BRIGHT wanderer, fair coquette of heaven,
 To whom alone it has been given
 To change and be adored for ever,
 Envy not this dim world, for never
 But once within its shadow grew
 One fair as——

EPITAPH.

THESE are two friends whose lives were undivided ;
 So let their memory be, now they have glided
 Under the grave ; let not their bones be parted,
 For their two hearts in life were single-hearted.

TRANSLATIONS.

HYMN TO MERCURY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF HOMER.

I.

SING, Muse, the son of Maia and of Jove,
The Herald-child, king of Arcadia
And all its pastoral hills, whom in sweet love
Having been interwoven, modest May
Bore Heaven's dread Supreme—an antique grove
Shadowed the cavern where the lovers lay
In the deep night, unseen by Gods or Men,
And white-armed Juno slumbered sweetly then.

II.

Now, when the joy of Jove had its fulfilling,
And Heaven's tenth moon chronicled her relief,
She gave to light a babe all babes excelling,
A schemer subtle beyond all belief;
A shepherd of thin dreams, a cow-stealing,
A night-watching, and door-waylaying thief,
Who 'mongst the Gods was soon about to thieve,
And other glorious actions to achieve.

III.

The babe was born at the first peep of day;
He began playing on the lyre at noon,
And the same evening did he steal away
Apollo's herds;—the fourth day of the moon
On which him bore the venerable May,
From her immortal limbs he leaped full soon,
Nor long could in the sacred cradle keep,
But out to seek Apollo's herds would creep.

IV.

Out of the lofty cavern wandering

He found a tortoise, and cried out—"A treasure!"
(For Mercury first made the tortoise sing)

The beast before the portal at his leisure

The flowery herbage was depasturing,

Moving his feet in a deliberate measure

Over the turf. Jove's profitable son

Eyeing him laughed, and laughing thus begun:—

V.

"A useful god-send are you to me now,

King of the dance, companion of the feast,

Lovely in all your nature! Welcome, you

Excellent plaything! Where, sweet mountain beast,
Got you that speckled shell? Thus much I know,

You must come home with me and be my guest;

You will give joy to me, and I will do

All that is in my power to honour you.

VI.

"Better to be at home than out of door;—

So come with me, and though it has been said
That you alive defend from magic power,

I know you will sing sweetly when you're dead."

Thus having spoken, the quaint infant bore,

Lifting it from the grass on which it fed,

And grasping it in his delighted hold,

His treasured prize into the cavern old.

VII.

Then scooping with a chisel of grey steel,

He bored the life and soul out of the beast—

Not swifter a swift thought of woe or weal

Darts through the tumult of a human breast

Which thronging cares annoy—not swifter wheel

The flashes of its torture and unrest

Out of the dizzy eyes—than Maia's son

All that he did devise hath featly done.

VIII.

And through the tortoise's hard stony skin

At proper distances small holes he made,

And fastened the cut stems of reeds within,

And with a piece of leather overlaid
The open space and fixed the cubits in,
Fitting the bridge to both, and stretched o'er all
Symphonious cords of sheep-gut rhythmical.

IX.

When he had wrought the lovely instrument,
He tried the chords, and made division meet
Preluding with the plectrum, and there went
Up from beneath his hand a tumult sweet
Of mighty sounds, and from his lips he sent
A strain of unpremeditated wit
Joyous and wild and wanton—such you may
Hear among revellers on a holiday.

X.

He sung how Jove and May of the bright sandal
Dallied in love not quite legitimate;
And his own birth, still scoffing at the scandal,
And naming his own name, did celebrate;
His mother's cave and servant maids he planned all
In plastic verse, her household stuff and state,
Perennial pot, trippet, and brazen pan,—
But singing, he conceived another plan.

XI.

Seized with a sudden fancy for fresh meat,
He in his sacred crib deposited
The hollow lyre, and from the cavern sweet
Rushed with great leaps up to the mountain's head,
Revolving in his mind some subtle feat
Of thievish craft, such as a swindler might
Devise in the lone season of dun night.

XII.

Lo! the great Sun under the ocean's bed has
Driven steeds and chariot—the child meanwhile strode
O'er the Pierian mountains clothed in shadows,
Where the immortal oxen of the God
Are pastured in the flowering unmown meadows,
And safely stalled in a remote abode—
The archer Argicide, elate and proud,
Drove fifty from the herd, lowing aloud.

XIII.

He drove them wandering o'er the sandy way,
 But, being ever mindful of his craft,
 Backward and forward drove he them astray,
 So that the tracks which seemed before, were aft;
 His sandals then he threw to the ocean spray,
 And for each foot he wrought a kind of raft
 Of tamarisk, and tamarisk-like sprigs,
 And bound them in a lump with withy twigs.

XIV.

And on his feet he tied these sandals light,
 The trail of whose wide leaves might not betray
 His track; and then, a self-sufficing wight,
 Like a man hastening on some distant way,
 He from Pieria's mountain bent his flight;
 But an old man perceived the infant pass
 Down green Onchestus heaped like beds with grass.

XV.

The old man stood dressing his sunny vine:
 "Halloo! old fellow with the crookèd shoulder!
 You grub those stumps? before they will bear wine
 Methinks even you must grow a little older:
 Attend, I pray, to this advice of mine,
 As you would 'scape what might appal a bolder—
 Seeing, see not—and hearing, hear not—and—
 If you have understanding—understand."

XVI.

So saying, Hermes roused the oxen vast;
 O'er shadowy mountain and resounding dell,
 And flower-paven plains, great Hermes past;
 Till the black night divine, which favouring fell
 Around his steps, grew grey, and morning fast
 Wakened the world to work, and from her cell
 Sea-strewn, the Pallantean Moon sublime
 Into her watch-tower just began to climb.

XVII.

Now to Alpheus he had driven all
 The broad-foreheaded oxen of the Sun;
 They came unwearied to the lofty stall
 And to the water troughs which ever run

Through the fresh fields—and when with rushgrass tall,
Lotus and all sweet herbage, every one
Had pastured been, the great God made them move
Towards the stall in a collected drove.

XVIII.

A mighty pile of wood the God then heaped,
And having soon conceived the mystery
Of fire, from two smooth laurel branches stript
The bark, and rubbed them in his palms,—on high
Suddenly forth the burning vapour leapt,
And the divine child saw delightedly—
Mercury first found out for human weal
Tinder-box, matches, fire-irons, flint and steel.

XIX.

And fine dry logs and roots innumerable
He gathered in a delve upon the ground—
And kindled them—and instantaneous
The strength of the fierce flame was breathed around:
And whilst the might of glorious Vulcan thus
Wrapt the great pile with glare and roaring sound,
Hermes dragged forth two heifers, lowing loud,
Close to the fire—such might was in the God.

XX.

And on the earth upon their backs he threw
The panting beasts, and rolled them o'er and o'er,
And bored their lives out. Without more ado
He cut up fat and flesh, and down before
The fire, on spits of wood he placed the two,
Toasting their flesh and ribs, and all the gore
Pursued in the bowels; and while this was done
He stretched their hides over a craggy stone.

XXI.

We mortals let an ox grow old, and then
Cut it up after long consideration,—
But joyous-minded Hermes from the glen
Drew the fat spoils to the more open station
Of a flat smooth space, and portioned them; and when
He had by lot assigned to each a ration
Of the twelve Gods, his mind became aware
Of all the joys which in religion are.

XXII.

For the sweet savour of the roasted meat
Tempted him though immortal. Nathelesse
He checked his haughty will and did not eat,
Though what it cost him words can scarce express,
And every wish to put such morsels sweet
Down his most sacred throat, he did repress;
But soon within the lofty portalled stall
He placed the fat and flesh and bones and all.

XXIII.

And every trace of the fresh butchery
And cooking, the God soon made disappear,
As if it all had vanished through the sky;
He burned the hoofs and horns and head and hair,
The insatiate fire devoured them hungrily;—
And when he saw that everything was clear,
He quenched the coals and trampled the black dust,
And in the stream his bloody sandals tossed.

XXIV.

All night he worked in the serene moonshine—
But when the light of day was spread abroad
He sought his natal mountain-peaks divine.
On his long wandering, neither man nor god
Had met him, since he killed Apollo's kine,
Nor house-dog had barked at him on his road;
Now he obliquely through the key-hole past,
Like a thin mist, or an autumnal blast.

XXV.

Right through the temple of the spacious cave
He went with soft light feet—as if his tread
Fell not on earth; no sound their falling gave;
Then to his cradle he crept quick, and spread
The swaddling-clothes about him; and the knave
Lay playing with the covering of the bed
With his left hand about his knees—the right
Held his beloved tortoise-lyre tight.

XXVI.

There he lay innocent as a new-born child,
As gossips say; but though he was a god,

The goddess, his fair mother, unbeguiled
Knew all that he had done being abroad:
"Whence come you, and from what adventure wild,
You cunning rogue, and where have you abode
All the long night, clothed in your impudence?
What have you done since you departed hence?"

XXVII.

"Apollo soon will pass within this gate
And bind your tender body in a chain
Inextricably tight, and fast as fate,
Unless you can delude the God again,
Even when within his arms—ah, runagate!
A pretty torment both for gods and men
Your father made when he made you!"—"Dear mother,"
Replied sly Hermes, "Wherefore scold and bother?"

XXVIII.

"As if I were like other babes as old,
And understood nothing of what is what;
And cared at all to hear my mother scold.
I in my subtle brain a scheme have got,
Which whilst the sacred stars round Heaven are rolled
Will profit you and me—nor shall our lot
Be as you counsel, without gifts or food,
To spend our lives in this obscure abode.

XXIX.

"But we will leave this shadow-peopled cave
And live among the Gods, and pass each day
In high communion, sharing what they have
Of profuse wealth and unexhausted prey;
And from the portion which my father gave
To Phœbus, I will snatch my share away,
Which if my father will not—nathelasse I,
Who am the king of robbers, can but try.

XXX.

"And, if Latona's son should find me out,
I'll countermine him by a deeper plan;
I'll pierce the Pythian temple-walls, though stout,
And sack the fane of every thing I can—
Cauldrons and tripods of great worth no doubt,
Each golden cup and polished brazen pan,

All the wrought tapestries and garments gay."—
So they together talked;—meanwhile the Day

XXXI.

Ætherial born arose out of the flood
Of flowing Ocean, bearing light to men.
Apollo past toward the sacred wood,
Which from the inmost depths of its green glen
Echoes the voice of Neptune,—and there stood
On the same spot in green Onchestus then
That same old animal, the vine-dresser,
Who was employed hedging his vineyard there.

XXXII.

Latona's glorious Son began:—"I pray
Tell, ancient hedger of Onchestus green,
Whether a drove of kine has past this way,
All heifers with crooked horns? for they have been
Stolen from the herd in high Pieria,
Where a black bull was fed apart, between
Two woody mountains in a neighbouring glen,
And four fierce dogs watched there, unanimous as men.

XXXIII.

"And what is strange, the author of this theft
Has stolen the fatted heifers every one,
But the four dogs and the black bull are left:—
Stolen they were last night at set of sun,
Of their soft beds and their sweet food bereft—
Now tell me, man born ere the world begun,
Have you seen any one pass with the cows?"—
To whom the man of overhanging brows:

XXXIV.

"My friend, it would require no common skill
Justly to speak of everything I see:
On various purposes of good or ill
Many pass by my vineyard,—and to me
'Tis difficult to know the invisible
Thoughts, which in all those many minds may be:—
Thus much alone I certainly can say,
I tilled these vines till the decline of day,

XXXV.

"And then I thought I saw, but dare not speak
With certainty of such a wondrous thing,
A child, who could not have been born a week,
Those fair-horned cattle closely following,
And in his hand he held a polished stick:
And, as on purpose, he walked wavering
From one side to the other of the road,
And with his face opposed the steps he trod."

XXXVI.

Apollo hearing this, past quickly on—
No wingèd omen could have shown more clear
That the deceiver was his father's son.
So the God wraps a purple atmosphere
Around his shoulders, and like fire is gone
To famous Pylos, seeking his kine there,
And found their track and his, yet hardly cold,
And cried—"What wonder do mine eyes behold!"

XXXVII.

"Here are the footsteps of the hornèd herd
Turned back towards their fields of asphodel;—
But these! are not the tracks of beast or bird,
Grey wolf, or bear, or lion of the dell,
Or manèd Centaur—sand was never stirred
By man or woman thus! Inexplicable!
Who with unwearied feet could e'er impress
The sand with such enormous vestiges?"

XXXVIII.

"That was most strange—but this is stranger still!"
Thus having said, Phœbus impetuously
Sought high Cyllene's forest-cinctured hill,
And the deep cavern where dark shadows lie,
And where the ambrosial nymph with happy will
Bore the Saturnian's love-child, Mercury—
And a delightful odour from the dew
Of the hill pastures, at his coming, flew.

XXXIX.

And Phœbus stooped under the craggy roof
Arched over the dark cavern:—Maia's child

Perceived that he came angry, far aloof,
 About the cows of which he had been beguiled,
 And over him the fine and fragrant woof
 Of his ambrosial swaddling clothes he piled—
 As among fire-brands lies a burning spark
 Covered, beneath the ashes cold and dark.

XL.

There, like an infant who had sucked his fill
 And now was newly washed and put to bed,
 Awake, but courting sleep with weary will,
 And gathered in a lump, hands, feet, and head,
 He lay, and his belovèd tortoise still
 He grasped and held under his shoulder-blade.
 Phœbus the lovely mountain-goddess knew,
 Not less her subtle, swindling baby, who

XLI.

Lay swathed in his sly wiles. Round every crook
 Of the ample cavern, for his kine, Apollo
 Looked sharp; and when he saw them not, he took
 The glittering key, and opened three great hollow
 Recesses in the rock—where many a nook
 Was filled with the sweet food immortals swallow,
 And mighty heaps of silver and of gold
 Were piled within—a wonder to behold!

XLII.

And white and silver robes, all overwrought
 With cunning workmanship of tracery sweet—
 Except among the Gods there can be nought
 In the wide world to be compared with it.
 Latona's offspring, after having sought
 His herds in every corner, thus did greet
 Great Hermes:—"Little cradled rogue, declare
 Of my illustrious heifers, where they are!

XLIII.

"Speak quickly! or a quarrel between us
 Must rise, and the event will be, that I
 Shall haul you into dismal Tartarus,
 In fiery gloom to dwell eternally;
 Nor shall your father nor your mother loose
 The bars of that black dungeon—utterly .

You shall be cast out from the light of day,
To rule the ghosts of men, unblest as they."

XLIV.

To whom thus Hermes slily answered:—"Son
Of great Latona, what a speech is this!
Why come you here to ask me what is done
With the wild oxen which it seems you miss?
I have not seen them, nor from any one
Have heard a word of the whole business;
If you should promise an immense reward,
I could not tell more than you now have heard.

XLV.

"An ox-stealer should be both tall and strong,
And I am but a little new-born thing,
Who, yet at least, can think of nothing wrong:—
My business is to suck, and sleep, and fling
The cradle-clothes about me all day long,—
Or half asleep, hear my sweet mother sing,
And to be washed in water clean and warm,
And hushed and kissed and kept secure from harm."

XLVI.

"O, let not e'er this quarrel be averred!
The astounded Gods would laugh at you, if e'er
You should allege a story so absurd,
As that a new-born infant forth could fare
Out of his home after a savage herd.
I was born yesterday—my small feet are
Too tender for the roads so hard and rough:—
And if you think that this is not enough,

XLVII.

"I swear a great oath, by my father's head,
That I stole not your cows, and that I know
Of no one else, who might, or could, or did.—
Whatever things cows are, I do not know,
For I have only heard the name."—This said,
He winked as fast as could be, and his brow
Was wrinkled, and a whistle loud gave he,
Like one who hears some strange absurdity.

XLVIII.

Apollo gently smiled and said:—"Aye, aye,—
 You cunning little rascal, you will bore
 Many a rich man's house, and your array
 Of thieves will lay their siege before his door,
 Silent as night, in night; and many a day
 In the wild glens rough shepherds will deplore
 That you or yours, having an appetite,
 Met with their cattle, comrade of the night!

XLIX.

"And this among the Gods shall be your gift,
 To be considered as the lord of those
 Who swindle, house-break, sheep-steal, and shop-lift;—
 But now if you would not your last sleep doze;
 Crawl out!"—Thus saying, Phœbus did uplift
 The subtle infant in his swaddling clothes,
 And in his arms, according to his wont,
 A scheme devised the illustrious Argiphont.

L.

* * * * *
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And sneezed and shuddered—Phœbus on the grass
 Him threw, and whilst all that he had designed
 He did perform—eager although to pass,
 Apollo darted from his mighty mind
 Towards the subtle babe the following scoff:—
 "Do not imagine this will get you off,

LI.

"You little swaddled child of Jove and May!"
 And seized him:—"By this omen I shall trace
 My noble herds, and you shall lead the way."—
 Cyllenian Hermes from the grassy place,
 Like one in earnest haste to get away,
 Rose, and with hands lifted towards his face
 Round both his ears—up from his shoulders drew
 His swaddling clothes, and—"What mean you to do

LII.

"With me, you unkind God?"—said Mercury:
 "Is it about these cows you tease me so?"

I wish the race of cows were perished!—I
Stole not your cows—I do not even know
What things cows are. Alas! I well may sigh,
That since I came into this world of woe,
I should have ever heard the name of one—
But I appeal to the Saturnian's throne."

LIII.

Thus Phœbus and the vagrant Mercury
Talked without coming to an explanation,
With adverse purpose. As for Phœbus, he
Sought not revenge, but only information,
And Hermes tried with lies and roguery
To cheat Apollo.—But when no evasion
Served—for the cunning one his match had found—
He paced on first over the sandy ground.

LIV.

He of the Silver Bow the child of Jove
Followed behind, till to their heavenly Sire
Came both his children—beautiful as Love,
And from his equal balance did require
A judgment in the cause wherein they strove.
O'er odorous Olympus and its snows
A murmuring tumult as they came arose,—

LV.

And from the folded depths of the great Hill,
While Hermes and Apollo reverent stood
Before Jove's throne, the indestructible
Immortals rushed in mighty multitude;
And whilst their seats in order due they fill,
The lofty Thunderer in a careless mood
To Phœbus said:—"Whence drive you this sweet prey,
This herald-baby, born but yesterday?—

LVI.

"A most important subject, trifler, this
To lay before the Gods!"—"Nay, father, nay,
When you have understood the business,
Say not that I alone am fond of prey.
I found this little boy in a recess
Under Cyllene's mountains far away—

A manifest and most apparent thief,
A scandal-monger beyond all belief.

LVII.

"I never saw his like either in heaven
Or upon earth for knavery or craft:—
Out of the field my cattle yester-even,
By the low shore on which the loud sea laughed,
He right down to the river-ford had driven;
And mere astonishment would make you daft
To see the double kind of footsteps strange
He has impressed wherever he did range.

LVIII.

"The cattle's track on the black dust, full well
Is evident, as if they went towards
The place from which they came—that asphodel
Meadow, in which I feed my many herds,—
His steps were most incomprehensible—
I know not how I can describe in words
Those tracks—he could have gone along the sands
Neither upon his feet nor on his hands;—

LIX.

"He must have had some other stranger mode
Of moving on: those vestiges immense,
Far as I traced them on the sandy road,
Seemed like the trail of oak-toppings:—but thence
No mark or track denoting where they trod
The hard ground gave:—but, working at his fence,
A mortal hedger saw him as he past
To Pylos, with the cows, in fiery haste.

LX.

"I found that in the dark he quietly
Had sacrificed some cows, and before light
Had thrown the ashes all dispersedly
About the road—then, still as gloomy night,
Had crept into his cradle, either eye
Rubbing, and cogitating some new sleight.
No eagle could have seen him as he lay
Hid in his cavern from the peering day.

LXI.

"I taxed him with the fact, when he averred
Most solemnly that he did neither see
Nor even had in any manner heard
Of my lost cows, whatever things cows be;
Nor could he tell, though offered a reward,
Not even who could tell of them to me."
So speaking, Phœbus sate; and Hermes then
Addressed the Supreme Lord of Gods and Men:—

LXII.

"Great Father, you know clearly beforehand
That all which I shall say to you is sooth;
I am a most veracious person, and
Totally unacquainted with untruth.
At sunrise, Phœbus came, but with no band
Of Gods to bear him witness, in great wrath,
To my abode, seeking his heifers there,
And saying that I must show him where they are,

LXIII.

"Or he would hurl me down the dark abyss.
I know that every Apollonian limb
Is clothed with speed and might and manliness,
As a green bank with flowers—but unlike him
I was born yesterday, and you may guess
He well knew this when he indulged the whim
Of bullying a poor little new-born thing
That slept, and never thought of cow-driving.

LXIV.

"Am I like a strong fellow who steals kine?
Believe me, dearest Father, such you are,
This driving of the herds is none of mine;
Across my threshold did I wander ne'er,
So may I thrive! I reverence the divine
Sun and the Gods, and I love you, and care
Even for this hard accuser—who must know
I am as innocent as they or you.

LXV.

"I swear by these most gloriously-wrought portals—
(It is, you will allow, an oath of might)

Through which the multitude of the Immortals

Pass and repass for ever, day and night,
Devising schemes for the affairs of mortals—

That I am guiltless; and I will requite,
Although mine enemy be great and strong,
His cruel threat—do thou defend the young!”

LXVI.

So speaking, the Cyllenian Argiphont

Winked, as if now his adversary was fitted:—
And Jupiter according to his wont,

Laughed heartily to hear the subtle-witted
Infant give such a plausible account,

And every word a lie. But he remitted
Judgment at present—and his exhortation
Was, to compose the affair by arbitration.

LXVII.

And they by mighty Jupiter were bidden

To go forth with a single purpose both,
Neither the other chiding nor yet chidden:

And Mercury with innocence and truth
To lead the way, and show where he had hidden

The mighty heifers.—Hermes, nothing loth,
Obeyed the Ægis-bearer's will—for he
Is able to persuade all easily.

LXVIII.

These lovely children of Heaven's highest Lord

Hastened to Pylos and the pastures wide
And lofty stalls by the Alphean ford,

Where wealth in the mute night is multiplied
With silent growth. Whilst Hermes drove the herd

Out of the stony cavern, Phœbus spied
The hides of those the little babe had slain,
Stretched on the precipice above the plain.

LXIX.

“How was it possible,” then Phœbus said,

“That you, a little child, born yesterday,
A thing on mother's milk and kisses fed,

Could two prodigious heifers ever flay?
Even I myself may well hereafter dread

Your prowess, offspring of Cyllenian May,

When you grow strong and tall."—He spoke, and bound
Stiff withy bands the infant's wrists around.

LXX.

He might as well have bound the oxen wild;
The withy bands, though starkly interknit,
Fell at the feet of the immortal child,
Loosened by some device of his quick wit.
Phœbus perceived himself again beguiled,
And stared—while Hermes sought some hole or pit,
Looking askance and winking fast as thought,
Where he might hide himself and not be caught.

LXXI.

Sudden he changed his plan, and with strange skill
Subdued the strong Latonian, by the might
Of winning music, to his mightier will;
His left hand held the lyre, and in his right
The plectrum struck the chords—unconquerable
Up from beneath his hand in circling flight
The gathering music rose—and sweet as Love
The penetrating notes did live and move

LXXII.

Within the heart of great Apollo—he
Listened with all his soul, and laughed for pleasure.
Close to his side stood harping fearlessly
The unabashed boy; and to the measure
Of the sweet lyre, there followed loud and free
His joyous voice; for he unlocked the treasure
Of his deep song, illustrating the birth
Of the bright Gods, and the dark desert Earth:

LXXIII.

And how to the Immortals every one
A portion was assigned of all that is;
But chief Mnemosyne did Maia's son
Clothe in the light of his loud melodies;—
And as each God was born or had begun
He in their order due and fit degrees
Sung of his birth and being—and did move
Apollo to unutterable love.

LXXIV.

These words were wingèd with his swift delight:

“You heifer-stealing schemer, well do you
Deserve that fifty oxen should requite

Such minstrelsies as I have heard even now.
Comrade of feasts, little contriving wight,

One of your secrets I would gladly know,
Whether the glorious power you now show forth
Was folded up within you at your birth,

LXXV.

“Or whether mortal taught or God inspired

The power of unpremeditated song?

Many divinest sounds have I admired,

The Olympian Gods and mortal men among;
But such a strain of wondrous, strange, untired,

And soul-awakening music, sweet and strong,
Yet did I never hear except from thee,
Offspring of May, impostor Mercury!

LXXVI.

“What Muse, what skill, what unimagined use,

What exercise of subtlest art, has given

Thy songs such power?—for those who hear may choose

From three, the choicest of the gifts of Heaven,
Delight, and love, and sleep,—sweet sleep, whose dew

Are sweeter than the balmy tears of even:—

And I, who speak this praise, am that Apollo
Whom the Olympian Muses ever follow:

LXXVII.

“And their delight is dance, and the blithe noise

Of song and overflowing poesy;

And sweet, even as desire, the liquid voice

Of pipes, that fills the clear air thrillingly;

But never did my inmost soul rejoice

In this dear work of youthful revelry,

As now I wonder at thee, son of Jove;

Thy harpings and thy song are soft as love.

LXXVIII.

“Now since thou hast, although so very small,

Science of arts so glorious, thus I swear,

And let this cornel javelin, keen and tall,
 Witness between us what I promise here,—
 That I will lead thee to the Olympian Hall,
 Honoured and mighty, with thy mother dear,
 And many glorious gifts in joy will give thee,
 And even at the end will ne'er deceive thee."

LXXIX.

To whom thus Mercury with prudent speech:—
 "Wisely hast thou enquired of my skill:
 I envy thee no thing I know to teach
 Even this day:—for both in word and will
 I would be gentle with thee; thou canst reach
 All things in thy wise spirit, and thy sill
 Is highest in heaven among the sons of Jove,
 Who loves thee in the fulness of his love.

LXXX.

"The Counsellor Supreme has given to thee
 Divinest gifts, out of the amplitude
 Of his profuse exhaustless treasury;
 By thee, 'tis said, the depths are understood
 Of his far voice; by thee the mystery
 Of all oracular fates,—and the dread mood
 Of the diviner is breathed up, even I—
 A child—perceive thy might and majesty—

LXXXI.

"Thou canst seek out and compass all that wit
 Can find or teach;—yet since thou wilt, come take
 The lyre—be mine the glory giving it—
 Strike the sweet chords, and sing aloud, and wake
 Thy joyous pleasure out of many a fit
 Of tranced sound—and with fleet fingers make
 Thy liquid-voiced comrade talk with thee,—
 It can talk measured music eloquently.

LXXXII.

"Then bear it boldly to the revel loud,
 Love-wakening dance, or feast of solemn state,
 A joy by night or day—for those endowed
 With art and wisdom who interrogate
 It teaches, babbling in delightful mood.
 All things which make the spirit most elate, . .

Soothing the mind with sweet familiar play,
Chasing the heavy shadows of dismay.

LXXXIII.

"To those who are unskilled in its sweet tongue,
Though they should question most impetuously
Its hidden soul, it gossips something wrong—
Some senseless and impertinent reply.
But thou who art as wise as thou art strong
Canst compass all that thou desirest. I
Present thee with this music-flowing shell,
Knowing thou canst interrogate it well.

LXXXIV.

"And let us two henceforth together feed
On this green mountain slope and pastoral plain,
The herds in litigation—they will breed
Quickly enough to recompense our pain,
If to the bulls and cows we take good heed;—
And thou, though somewhat over fond of gain,
Grudge me not half the profit."—Having spoke,
The shell he proffered, and Apollo took.

LXXXV.

And gave him in return the glittering lash,
Installing him as herdsman;—from the look
Of Mercury then laughed a joyous flash.
And then Apollo with the plectrum strook
The chords, and from beneath his hands a crash
Of mighty sounds rushed up, whose music shook
The soul with sweetness, and like an adept
His sweeter voice a just accordance kept.

LXXXVI.

The herd went wandering o'er the divine mead,
Whilst these most beautiful Sons of Jupiter
Won their swift way up to the snowy head
Of white Olympus, with the joyous lyre
Soothing their journey; and their father dread
Gathered them both into familiar
Affection sweet,—and then, and now, and ever,
Hermes must love Him of the Golden Quiver,

LXXXVII.

To whom he gave the lyre that sweetly sounded,
Which skilfully he held and played thereon.
He piped the while, and far and wide rebounded
The echo of his pipings; every one
Of the Olympians sat with joy astounded,
While he conceived another piece of fun,
One of his old tricks—which the God of Day
Perceiving, said:—"I fear thee, Son of May;—

LXXXVIII.

"I fear thee and thy sly camelion spirit,
Lest thou shouldst steal my lyre and crookèd bow;
This glory and power thou dost from Jove inherit,
To teach all craft upon the earth below;
Thieves love and worship thee—it is thy merit
To make all mortal business ebb and flow
By roguery:—now, Hermes, if you dare,
By sacred Styx a mighty oath to swear

LXXXIX.

"That you will never rob me, you will do
A thing extremely pleasing to my heart."
Then Mercury sware by the Stygian dew,
That he would never steal his bow or dart,
Or lay his hands on what to him was due,
Or ever would employ his powerful art
Against his Pythian fane. Then Phœbus swore
There was no God or man whom he loved more.

XC.

"And I will give thee as a good-will token,
The beautiful wand of wealth and happiness;
A perfect three-leaved rod of gold unbroken,
Whose magic will thy footsteps ever bless;
And whatsoever by Jove's voice is spoken
Of earthly or divine from its recess,
It, like a loving soul to thee will speak,
And more than this, do thou forbear to seek.

XCI.

"For, dearest child, the divinations high
Which thou requirest, 'tis unlawful ever

That thou, or any other deity

Should understand—and vain were the endeavour;
For they are hidden in Jove's mind, and I

In trust of them, have sworn that I would never
Betray the counsels of Jove's inmost will
To any God—the oath was terrible.

XCII.

“Then, golden-wanded brother, ask me not

To speak the fates by Jupiter designed;
But be it mine to tell their various lot

To the unnumbered tribes of human kind.
Let good to these, and ill to those be wrought
As I dispense—but he who comes consigned
By voice and wings of perfect augury
To my great shrine, shall find avail in me.

XCIII.

“Him will I not deceive, but will assist;

But he who comes relying on such birds
As chatter vainly, who would strain and twist

The purpose of the Gods with idle words,
And deems their knowledge light, he shall have missed

His road—whilst I among my other hoards
His gifts deposit. Yet, O son of May,
I have another wondrous thing to say.

XCIV.

“There are three Fates, three virgin Sisters, who

Rejoicing in their wind-outspeeding wings,
Their heads with flour snowed over white and new,

Sit in a vale round which Parnassus flings
Its circling skirts—from these I have learned true
Vaticinations of remotest things.

My father cared not. Whilst they search out dooms,
They sit apart and feed on honeycombs.

XCV.

“They, having eaten the fresh honey, grow

Drunk with divine enthusiasm, and utter
With earnest willingness the truth they know;

But if deprived of that sweet food, they mutter
All plausible delusions;—these to you

I give;—if you enquire, they will not stutter;

Delight your own soul with them:—any man
You would instruct may profit if he can.

XCVI.

"Take these and the fierce oxen, Maia's child—
O'er many a horse and toil-enduring mule,
O'er jagged-jawed lions, and the wild
White-tusked boars, o'er all, by field or pool,
Of cattle which the mighty Mother mild
Nourishes in her bosom, thou shalt rule—
Thou dost alone the veil of death uplift—
Thou givest not—yet this is a great gift."

XCVII.

Thus King Apollo loved the child of May
In truth, and Jove covered them with love and joy.
Hermes with Gods and men even from that day
Mingled, and wrought the latter much annoy,
And little profit, going far astray
Through the dun night. Farewell, delightful Boy,
Of Jove and Maia sprung,—never by me,
Nor thou, nor other songs, shall unremembered be.

HOMER'S HYMN TO CASTOR AND POLLUX.

YE wild-eyed Muses, sing the Twins of Jove,
Whom the fair-ancled Leda mixed in love
With mighty Saturn's heaven-obscuring Child,
On Taygetus, that lofty mountain wild,
Brought forth in joy, mild Pollux void of blame, 5
And steed-subduing Castor, heirs of fame.
These are the Powers who earth-born mortals save
And ships, whose flight is swift along the wave.
When wintry tempests o'er the savage sea
Are raging, and the sailors tremblingly 10
Call on the Twins of Jove with prayer and vow,
Gathered in fear upon the lofty prow,
And sacrifice with snow-white lambs, the wind
And the huge billow bursting close behind,
Even then beneath the weltering waters bear 15
The staggering ship—they suddenly appear,

On yellow wings rushing athwart the sky,
 And lull the blasts in mute tranquillity,
 And strew the waves on the white ocean's bed,
 Fair omen of the voyage; from toil and dread, 23
 The sailors rest, rejoicing in the sight,
 And plough the quiet sea in safe delight.

HOMER'S HYMN TO THE MOON.

DAUGHTERS of Jove, whose voice is melody,
 Muses, who know and rule all minstrelsy!
 Sing the wide-winged Moon. Around the earth,
 From her immortal head in Heaven shot forth,
 Far light is scattered—boundless glory springs, 5
 Where'er she spreads her many-beaming wings
 The lampless air glows round her golden crown.

But when the Moon divine from Heaven is gone
 Under the sea, her beams within abide,
 Till, bathing her bright limbs in Ocean's tide, 10
 Clothing her form in garments glittering far,
 And having yoked to her immortal car
 The beam-invested steeds, whose necks on high
 Curve back, she drives to a remoter sky
 A western Crescent, borne impetuously. 15
 Then is made full the circle of her light,
 And as she grows, her beams more bright and bright,
 Are poured from Heaven, where she is hovering then,
 A wonder and a sign to mortal men.

The Son of Saturn with this glorious Power 20
 Mingled in love and sleep—to whom she bore,
 Pandeia, a bright maid of beauty rare
 Among the Gods, whose lives eternal are.

Hail Queen, great Moon, white-armed Divinity,
 Fair-haired and favourable, thus with thee, 25
 My song beginning, by its music sweet
 Shall make immortal many a glorious feat
 Of demigods, with lovely lips, so well
 Which minstrels, servants of the muses, tell

HOMER'S HYMN TO THE SUN.

OFFSPRING of Jove, Calliope, once more
 To the bright Sun, thy hymn of music pour;
 Whom to the child of star-clad Heaven and Earth
 Euryphaessa, large-eyed nymph, brought forth;
 Euryphaessa, the famed sister fair, 5
 Of great Hyperion, who to him did bear
 A race of loveliest children; the young Morn,
 Whose arms are like twin roses newly born,
 The fair-haired Moon, and the immortal Sun,
 Who, borne by heavenly steeds his race doth run 10
 Unconquerably, illuming the abodes
 Of mortal men and the eternal gods.

Fiercely look forth his awe-inspiring eyes,
 Beneath his golden helmet, whence arise
 And are shot forth afar, clear beams of light; 15
 His countenance with radiant glory bright,
 Beneath his graceful locks far shines around,
 And the light vest with which his limbs are bound
 Of woof ætherial, delicately twined
 Glows in the stream of the uplifting wind. 20
 His rapid steeds soon bear him to the west;
 Where their steep flight his hands divine arrest,
 And the fleet car with yoke of gold, which he
 Sends from bright heaven beneath the shadowy sea.

HOMER'S HYMN TO THE EARTH, MOTHER OF ALL.

O UNIVERSAL mother, who dost keep
 From everlasting thy foundations deep,
 Eldest of things, Great Earth, I sing of thee;
 All shapes that have their dwelling in the sea,
 All things that fly, or on the ground divine 5
 Live, move, and there are nourished—these are thine;
 These from thy wealth thou dost sustain; from thee
 Fair babes are born, and fruits on every tree
 Hang ripe and large, revered Divinity!

The life of mortal men beneath thy sway 10
 Is held; thy power both gives and takes away!
 Happy are they whom thy mild favours nourish,
 All things unstinted round them grow and flourish.
 For them, endures the life-sustaining field
 Its load of harvest, and their cattle yield 15
 Large increase, and their house with wealth is filled.
 Such honoured dwell in cities fair and free,
 The homes of lovely women, prosperously;
 Their sons exult in youth's new budding gladness,
 And their fresh daughters free from care or sadness, 20
 With bloom-inwoven dance and happy song,
 On the soft flowers the meadow-grass among,
 Leap round them sporting—such delights by thee
 Are given, rich Power, revered Divinity.

Mother of gods, thou wife of starry Heaven, 25
 Farewell! be thou propitious, and be given
 A happy life for this brief melody,
 Nor thou nor other songs shall unremembered be.

HOMER'S HYMN TO MINERVA.

I SING the glorious Power with azure eyes,
 Athenian Pallas! tameless, chaste, and wise,
 Tritogenia, town-preserving maid,
 Revered and mighty; from his awful head
 Whom Jove brought forth, in warlike armour drest, 5
 Golden, all radiant! wonder strange possessed
 The everlasting Gods that shape to see,
 Shaking a javelin keen, impetuously
 Rush from the crest of Ægis-bearing Jove;
 Fearfully Heaven was shaken, and did move 10
 Beneath the might of the Cerulean-eyed;
 Earth dreadfully resounded, far and wide,
 And lifted from its depths, the sea swelled high
 In purple billows, the tide suddenly
 Stood still, and great Hyperion's son long time 15
 Checked his swift steeds, till where she stood sublime,

Pallas from her immortal shoulders threw
 The arms divine; wise Jove rejoiced to view.
 Child of the Ægis-bearer, hail to thee,
 Nor thine nor others' praise shall unremembered be. 20

HOMER'S HYMN TO VENUS.

[V. 1-55, with some omissions.]

MUSE, sing the deeds of golden Aphrodite,
 Who wakens with her smile the lulled delight
 Of sweet desire, taming the eternal kings
 Of Heaven, and men, and all the living things
 That fleet along the air, or whom the sea, 5
 Or earth with her maternal ministry
 Nourish innumerable, thy delight
 All seek O crownèd Aphrodite.
 Three spirits canst thou not deceive or quell,
 Minerva, child of Jove, who loves too well 10
 Fierce war and mingling combat, and the fame
 Of glorious deeds, to heed thy gentle flame.
 Diana, golden-shafted queen,
 Is tamed not by thy smiles; the shadows green
 Of the wild woods, the bow, the . . . 15
 And piercing cries amid the swift pursuit
 Of beasts among waste mountains, such delight
 Is hers, and men who know and do the right.
 Nor Saturn's first-born daughter, Vesta chaste,
 Whom Neptune and Apollo wooed the last, 20
 Such was the will of ægis-bearing Jove,
 But sternly she refused the ills of Love,
 And by her mighty father's head she swore
 An oath not unperformed, that evermore
 A virgin she would live 'mid deities 25
 Divine: her father, for such gentle ties
 Renounced, gave glorious gifts, thus in his hall
 She sits and feeds luxuriously. O'er all
 In every fane, her honours first arise
 From men—the eldest of Divinities. 30

These spirits she persuades not, nor deceives,
But none beside escape, so well she weaves
Her unseen toils; nor mortal men, nor gods
Who live secure in their unseen abodes.
She won the soul of him whose fierce delight 35
Is thunder—first in glory and in might.
And, as she willed, his mighty mind deceiving,
With mortal limbs his deathless limbs inweaving,
Concealed him from his spouse and sister fair,
Whom to wise Saturn ancient Rhea bare. 40

but in return,
In Venus Jove did soft desire awaken,
That by her own enchantments overtaken,
She might, no more from human union free,
Burn for a nursling of mortality. 45
For once, amid the assembled Deities,
The laughter-loving Venus from her eyes
Shot forth the light of a soft starlight smile,
And boasting said, that she, secure the while,
Could bring at will to the assembled gods 50
The mortal tenants of earth's dark abodes,
And mortal offspring from a deathless stem
She could produce in scorn and spite of them.
Therefore he poured desire into her breast
Of young Anchises, 55
Feeding his herds among the mossy fountains
Of the wide Ida's many-folded mountains,
Whom Venus saw, and loved, and the love clung
Like wasting fire her senses wild among.

THE CYCLOPS;

A SATYRIC DRAMA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF EURIPIDES.

SILENUS.

CHORUS OF SATYRS.

ULYSSES.

THE CYCLOPS.

SILENUS.

O, BACCHUS, what a world of toil, both now
 And ere these limbs were overworn with age,
 Have I endured for thee! First, when thou fled'st
 The mountain-nymphs who nurst thee, driven afar
 By the strange madness Juno sent upon thee; 5
 Then in the battle of the sons of Earth,
 When I stood foot by foot close to thy side,
 No unpropitious fellow-combatant,
 And driving through his shield my wingèd spear,
 Slew vast Enceladus. Consider now, 10
 Is it a dream of which I speak to thee?
 By Jove it is not, for you have the trophies!
 And now I suffer more than all before.
 For when I heard that Juno had devised
 A tedious voyage for you, I put to sea 15
 With all my children quaint in search of you,
 And I myself stood on the beakèd prow
 And fixed the naked mast, and all my boys
 Leaning upon their oars, with splash and strain
 Made white with foam the green and purple sea,— 20
 And so we sought you, king. We were sailing
 Near Malea, when an eastern wind arose,
 And drove us to this wild Ætnean rock;
 The one-eyed children of the Ocean God,
 The man-destroying Cyclopes inhabit, 25
 On this wild shore, their solitary caves,
 And one of these, named Polypheme, has caught us

To be his slaves; and so, for all delight
 Of Bacchic sports, sweet dance and melody,
 We keep this lawless giant's wandering flocks. 30
 My sons indeed, on far declivities,
 Young things themselves, tend on the youngling sheep,
 But I remain to fill the water casks,
 Or sweeping the hard floor, or ministering
 Some impious and abominable meal 35
 To the fell Cyclops. I am wearied of it!
 And now I must scrape up the littered floor
 With this great iron rake, so to receive
 My absent master and his evening sheep
 In a cave neat and clean. Even now I see 40
 My children tending the flocks hitherward.
 Ha! what is this? are your Sicinnian measures
 Even now the same, as when with dance and song
 You brought young Bacchus to Althæa's halls?

CHORUS OF SATYRS.

STROPHE.

Where has he of race divine 45
 Wandered in the winding rocks?
 Here the air is calm and fine
 For the father of the flocks;—
 Here the grass is soft and sweet,
 And the river-eddies meet 50
 In the trough beside the cave,
 Bright as in their fountain wave.—
 Neither here, nor on the dew
 Of the lawny uplands feeding?
 Oh, you come!—a stone at you 55
 Will I throw to mend your breeding;—
 Get along, you hornèd thing,
 Wild, seditious, rambling!

EPODE.

An Iacchic melody
 To the golden Aphrodite 60
 Will I lift, as erst did I
 Seeking her and her delight
 With the Mænads, whose white feet
 To the music glance and fleet.

Bacchus, O belovèd, where, 65
 Shaking wide thy yellow hair,
 Wanderest thou alone, afar?
 To the one-eyed Cyclops, we,
 Who by right thy servants are,
 Minister in misery, 70
 In these wretched goat-skins clad,
 Far from thy delights and thee.

SILENUS.

Be silent, sons; command the slaves to drive
 The gathered flocks into the rock-roofed cave.

CHORUS.

Go! But what needs this serious haste, O father? 75

SILENUS.

I see a Grecian vessel on the coast,
 And thence the rowers with some general
 Approaching to this cave.—About their necks
 Hang empty vessels, as they wanted food,
 And water-flasks.—O, miserable strangers! 80
 Whence come they, that they know not what and who
 My master is, approaching in ill hour
 The inhospitable roof of Polypheme,
 And the Cyclopiàn jaw-bone, man-destroying?
 Be silent, Satyrs, while I ask and hear 85
 Whence coming, they arrive the Ætnean hill.

ULYSSES.

Friends, can you show me some clear water spring,
 The remedy of our thirst? Will any one
 Furnish with food seamen in want of it?
 Ha! what is this? We seem to be arrived 90
 At the blithe court of Bacchus. I observe
 This sportive band of Satyrs near the caves.
 First let me greet the elder.—Hail!

SILENUS.

Hail thou,
 O, Stranger! tell thy country and thy race.

ULYSSES.

The Ithacan Ulysses and the king 95
 Of Cephalonia.

SILENUS.

Oh! I know the man,
Wordy and shrewd, the son of Sisypheus.

ULYSSES.

I am the same, but do not rail upon me.—

SILENUS.

Whence sailing do you come to Sicily?

ULYSSES.

From Ilion, and from the Trojan toils.

100

SILENUS.

How touched you not at your paternal shore?

ULYSSES.

The strength of tempests bore me here by force.

SILENUS.

The self-same accident occurred to me.

ULYSSES.

Were you then driven here by stress of weather?

SILENUS.

Following the Pirates who had kidnapped Bacchus.

105

ULYSSES.

What land is this, and who inhabit it?—

SILENUS.

Ætna, the loftiest peak in Sicily.

ULYSSES.

And are there walls, and tower-surrounded towns?

SILENUS.

There are not.—These lone rocks are bare of men.

ULYSSES.

And who possess the land? the race of beasts?

110

SILENUS.

Cyclops, who live in caverns, not in houses.

ULYSSES.

Obeying whom? Or is the state popular?

SILENUS.

Shepherds: no one obeys any in aught.

ULYSSES.

How live they? do they sow the corn of Ceres?

SILENUS.

On milk and cheese, and on the flesh of sheep. 115

ULYSSES.

Have they the Bromian drink from the vine's stream?

SILENUS.

Ah! no; they live in an ungracious land.

ULYSSES.

And are they just to strangers?—hospitable?

SILENUS.

They think the sweetest thing a stranger brings
Is his own flesh.

ULYSSES.

What! do they eat man's flesh? 120

SILENUS.

No one comes here who is not eaten up.

ULYSSES.

The Cyclops now—where is he? Not at home?

SILENUS.

Absent on Ætna, hunting with his dogs.

ULYSSES.

Know'st thou what thou must do to aid us hence?

SILENUS.

I know not: we will help you all we can. 125

ULYSSES.

Provide us food, of which we are in want.

SILENUS.

Here is not anything, as I said, but meat.

ULYSSES.

But meat is a sweet remedy for hunger.

SILENUS.

Cow's milk there is, and store of curdled cheese.

ULYSSES.

Bring out:—I would see all before I bargain. 130

SILENUS.

But how much gold will you engage to give?

ULYSSES.

I bring no gold, but Bacchic juice.

SILENUS.

O, joy!

'Tis long since these dry lips were wet with wine.

ULYSSES.

Maron, the son of the God, gave it me.

SILENUS.

Whom I have nursed a baby in my arms.

135

ULYSSES.

The son of Bacchus, for your clearer knowledge.

SILENUS.

Have you it now?—or is it in the ship?

ULYSSES.

Old man, this skin contains it, which you see.

SILENUS.

Why this would hardly be a mouthful for me.

ULYSSES.

Nay, twice as much as you can draw from thence.

140

SILENUS.

You speak of a fair fountain, sweet to me.

ULYSSES.

Would you first taste of the unmingled wine?

SILENUS.

'Tis just—tasting invites the purchaser.

ULYSSES.

Here is the cup, together with the skin.

SILENUS.

Pour: that the draught may fillip my remembrance.

145

ULYSSES.

See!

SILENUS.

Papaiax! what a sweet smell it has!

ULYSSES.

You see it then?—

SILENUS.

By Jove, no! but I smell it.

ULYSSES.

Taste, that you may not praise it in words only.

SILENUS.

Babai! Great Bacchus calls me forth to dance!
Joy! joy!

ULYSSES.

Did it flow sweetly down your throat? 150

SILENUS.

So that it tingled to my very nails.

ULYSSES.

And in addition I will give you gold.

SILENUS.

Let gold alone! only unlock the cask.

ULYSSES.

Bring out some cheeses now, or a young goat.

SILENUS.

That will I do, despising any master.

155

Yes, let me drink one cup, and I will give
All that the Cyclops feed upon their mountains.

* * * * *

CHORUS.

Ye have taken Troy and laid your hands on Helen?

ULYSSES.

And utterly destroyed the race of Priam.

* * * * *

SILENUS.

The wanton wretch! she was bewitched to see

160

The many-coloured anklets and the chain

Of woven gold which girt the neck of Paris,

And so she left that good man Menelaus.

There should be no more women in the world

But such as are reserved for me alone.—

165

See, here are sheep, and here are goats, Ulysses,

Here are unsparing cheeses of pressed milk;

Take them; depart with what good speed ye may;

First leaving my reward, the Bacchic dew

Of joy-inspiring grapes.

ULYSSES.

Ah me! Alas!

170

What shall we do? the Cyclops is at hand!

Old man, we perish! whither can we fly?

SILENUS.

Hide yourselves quick within that hollow rock.

ULYSSES.

'Twere perilous to fly into the net.

SILENUS.

The cavern has recesses numberless;

175

Hide yourselves quick.

ULYSSES.

That will I never do!

The mighty Troy would be indeed disgraced

If I should fly one man. How many times

Have I withstood, with shield immovable,

Ten thousand Phrygians!—if I needs must die,

180

Yet will I die with glory;—if I live,

The praise which I have gained will yet remain.

SILENUS.

What, ho! assistance, comrades, haste assistance!

The CYCLOPS, SILENUS, ULYSSES; CHORUS.

CYCLOPS.

What is this tumult? Bacchus is not here,

Nor tympanies nor brazen castanets.

185

How are my young lambs in the cavern? Milking

Their dams or playing by their sides? And is

The new cheese pressed into the bull-rush baskets?

Speak! I'll beat some of you till you rain tears—

Look up, not downwards when I speak to you.

190

SILENUS.

See! I now gape at Jupiter himself,

I stare upon Orion and the stars.

CYCLOPS.

Well, is the dinner fitly cooked and laid?

SILENUS.

All ready, if your throat is ready too.

194

CYCLOPS.

Are the bowls full of milk besides?

SILENUS.

O'er-brimming;

So you may drink a tunful if you will.

CYCLOPS.

Is it ewe's milk or cow's milk, or both mixed?—

SILENUS.

Both, either; only pray don't swallow me.

CYCLOPS.

By no means.—

* * * * *

What is this crowd I see beside the stalls? 200

Outlaws or thieves? for near my cavern-home,

I see my young lambs coupled two by two

With willow bands; mixed with my cheeses lie

Their implements; and this old fellow here

Has his bald head broken with stripes.

SILENUS.

Ah me!

205

I have been beaten till I burn with fever.

CYCLOPS.

By whom? Who laid his fist upon your head?

SILENUS.

Those men, because I would not suffer them

To steal your goods.

CYCLOPS.

Did not the rascals know

I am a God, sprung from the race of heaven? 210

SILENUS.

I told them so, but they bore off your things,

And ate the cheese in spite of all I said,

And carried out the lambs—and said, moreover,

They'd pin you down with a three-cubit collar,

And pull your vitals out through your one eye, 215

Torture your back with stripes, then binding you,

Throw you as ballast into the ship's hold,

And then deliver you, a slave, to move

Enormous rocks, or found a vestibule.

CYCLOPS.

In truth? Nay, haste, and place in order quickly 220

The cooking knives, and heap upon the hearth,

And kindle it, a great faggot of wood—

As soon as they are slaughtered, they shall fill

My belly, broiling warm from the live coals,
 Or boiled and seethed within the bubbling cauldron. 225
 I am quite sick of the wild mountain game,
 Of stags and lions I have gorged enough,
 And I grow hungry for the flesh of men.

SILENUS.

Nay, master, something new is very pleasant
 After one thing for ever, and of late 230
 Very few strangers have approached our cave.

ULYSSES.

Hear, Cyclops, a plain tale on the other side.
 We, wanting to buy food, came from our ship
 Into the neighbourhood of your cave, and here
 This old Silenus gave us in exchange 235
 These lambs for wine, the which he took and drank,
 And all by mutual compact, without force.
 There is no word of truth in what he says,
 For sily he was selling all your store.

SILENUS.

I? May you perish, wretch—

ULYSSES.

If I speak false! 240

SILENUS.

Cyclops, I swear by Neptune who begot thee,
 By mighty Triton and by Nereus old,
 Calypso and the glaucous ocean Nymphs,
 The sacred waves and all the race of fishes—
 Be these the witnesses, my dear sweet master, 245
 My darling little Cyclops, that I never
 Gave any of your stores to these false strangers;—
 If I speak false may those whom most I love,
 My children, perish wretchedly!

CHORUS.

There stop!
 I saw him giving these things to the strangers. 250
 If I speak false, then may my father perish,
 But do not thou wrong hospitality.

CYCLOPS.

You lie! I swear that he is juster far

Than Rhadamanthus—I trust more in him.
 But let me ask, whence have ye sailed, O strangers?
 Who are you? And what city nourished ye? 256

ULYSSES.

Our race is Ithacan—having destroyed
 The town of Troy, the tempests of the sea
 Have driven us on thy land, O Polypheme.

CYCLOPS.

What, have ye shared in the unenvied spoil 260
 Of the false Helen, near Scamander's stream?

ULYSSES.

The same, having endured a woful toil.

CYCLOPS.

O, basest expedition! sailed ye not
 From Greece to Phrygia for one woman's sake?

ULYSSES.

'Twas the Gods' work—no mortal was in fault. 265

But, O great offspring of the ocean-king,
 We pray thee and admonish thee with freedom,
 That thou dost spare thy friends who visit thee,
 And place no impious food within thy jaws.

For in the depths of Greece we have upreared 270
 Temples to thy great father, which are all
 His homes. The sacred bay of Tænarus
 Remains inviolate, and each dim recess

Scooped high on the Malean promontory,
 And aëry Sunium's silver-veined crag, 275
 Which divine Pallas keeps unprofaned ever,
 The Gerastian asylums, and whate'er

Within wide Greece our enterprise has kept
 From Phrygian contumely; and in which 280
 You have a common care, for you inhabit
 The skirts of Grecian land, under the roots

Of Ætna and its crags, spotted with fire.
 Turn then to converse under human laws,

Receive us shipwrecked suppliants, and provide 285
 Food, clothes, and fire, and hospitable gifts;
 Nor fixing upon oxen-piercing spits

Our limbs, so fill your belly and your jaws.
 Priam's wide land has widowed Greece enough;

And weapon-wingèd murder heaped together
 Enough of dead, and wives are husbandless, 293
 And ancient women and grey fathers wail
 Their childless age;—if you should roast the rest,
 And 'tis a bitter feast that you prepare,
 Where then would any turn? Yet be persuaded;
 Forego the lust of your jaw-bone; prefer 295
 Pious humanity to wicked will:
 Many have bought too dear their evil joys.

SILENTS.

Let me advise you, do not spare a morsel
 Of all his flesh. If you should eat his tongue
 You would become most eloquent, O Cyclops. 300

CYCLOPS.

Wealth, my good fellow, is the wise man's God,
 All other things are a pretence and boast.
 What are my father's ocean promontories,
 The sacred rocks whereon he dwells, to me?
 Stranger, I laugh to scorn Jove's thunderbolt, 305
 I know not that his strength is more than mine.
 As to the rest I care not:—When he pours
 Rain from above, I have a close pavilion
 Under this rock, in which I lie supine,
 Feasting on a roast calf or some wild beast, 310
 And drinking pans of milk, and gloriously
 Emulating the thunder of high heaven.
 And when the Thracian wind pours down the snow,
 I wrap my body in the skins of beasts,
 Kindle a fire, and bid the snow whirl on. 315
 The earth, by force, whether it will or no,
 Bringing forth grass, fattens my flocks and herds,
 Which, to what other God but to myself
 And this great belly, first of deities,
 Should I be bound to sacrifice? I well know 320
 The wise man's only Jupiter is this,
 To eat and drink during his little day,
 And give himself no care. And as for those
 Who complicate with laws the life of man,
 I freely give them tears for their reward. 325
 I will not cheat my soul of its delight,

Or hesitate in dining upon you:—
 And that I may be quit of all demands,
 These are my hospitable gifts;—fierce fire
 And yon ancestral cauldron, which o'er-bubbling 330
 Shall finely cook your miserable flesh.
 Creep in!—

* * * * * *

ULYSSES.

Ai! ai! I have escaped the Trojan toils,
 I have escaped the sea, and now I fall
 Under the cruel grasp of one impious man. 335
 O Pallas, mistress, Goddess, sprung from Jove,
 Now, now, assist me! Mightier toils than Troy
 Are these;—I totter on the chasms of peril;—
 And thou who inhabitest the thrones
 Of the bright stars, look, hospitable Jove, 340
 Upon this outrage of thy deity,
 Otherwise be considered as no God!

CHORUS (*alone*).

For your gaping gulph, and your gullet wide
 The ravin is ready on every side,
 The limbs of the strangers are cooked and done, 345
 There is boiled meat, and roast meat, and meat from
 the coal,
 You may chop it, and tear it, and gnash it for fun,
 An hairy goat's-skin contains the whole.
 Let me but escape, and ferry me o'er
 The stream of your wrath to a safer shore. 350
 The Cyclops Ætnean is cruel and bold,
 He murders the strangers
 That sit on his hearth,
 And dreads no avengers
 To rise from the earth. 355
 He roasts the men before they are cold,
 He snatches them broiling from the coal,
 And from the cauldron pulls them whole,
 And minces their flesh and gnaws their bone
 With his cursèd teeth, till all be gone. 360
 Farewell, foul pavilion:
 Farewell, rites of dread!

The Cyclops vermilion,
 With slaughter uncloying,
 Now feasts on the dead,
 In the flesh of strangers joying!

365

ULYSSES.

O Jupiter! I saw within the cave
 Horrible things; deeds to be feigned in words,
 But not to be believed as being done.

CHORUS.

What! sawest thou the impious Polypheme
 Feasting upon your loved companions now?

370

ULYSSES.

Selecting two, the plumpest of the crowd,
 He grasped them in his hands.—

CHORUS.

Unhappy man!

* * * * *

ULYSSES.

Soon as we came into this craggy place,
 Kindling a fire, he cast on the broad hearth
 The knotty limbs of an enormous oak,
 Three waggon-loads at least, and then he strewed
 Upon the ground, beside the red fire-light,
 His couch of pine leaves; and he milked the cows,
 And pouring forth the white milk, filled a bowl
 Three cubits wide and four in depth, as much
 As would contain ten amphoræ, and bound it
 With ivy wreaths; then placed upon the fire
 A brazen pot to boil, and made red hot
 The points of spits, not sharpened with the sickle,
 But with a fruit tree bough, and with the jaws
 Of axes for Ætnean slaughterings.¹
 And when this God-abandoned cook of hell
 Had made all ready, he seized two of us
 And killed them in a kind of measured manner;
 For he flung one against the brazen rivets
 Of the huge cauldron, and seized the other
 By the foot's tendon, and knocked out his brains

375

380

385

390

¹ I confess I do not understand this.

Upon the sharp edge of the craggy stone:
Then peeled his flesh with a great cooking-knife 395
And put him down to roast. The other's limbs
He chopped into the cauldron to be boiled.
And I, with the tears raining from my eyes,
Stood near the Cyclops, ministering to him;
The rest, in the recesses of the cave, 400
Clung to the rock like bats, bloodless with fear.
When he was filled with my companions' flesh,
He threw himself upon the ground and sent
A loathsome exhalation from his maw.
Then a divine thought came to me. I filled 405
The cup of Maron, and I offered him
To taste, and said:—"Child of the Ocean God,
Behold what drink the vines of Greece produce,
The exultation and the joy of Bacchus."
He, satiated with his unnatural food, 410
Received it, and at one draught drank it off,
And taking my hand, praised me:—"Thou hast given
A sweet draught after a sweet meal, dear guest."
And I perceiving that it pleased him, filled
Another cup, well knowing that the wine 415
Would wound him soon and take a sure revenge.
And the charm fascinated him, and I
Plied him cup after cup, until the drink
Had warmed his entrails, and he sang aloud
In concert with my wailing fellow-seamen 420
A hideous discord—and the cavern rung.
I have stolen out, so that if you will
You may achieve my safety and your own.
But say, do you desire, or not, to fly
This uncompanionable man, and dwell 425
As was your wont among the Grecian Nymphs
Within the fanes of your beloved God?
Your father there within agrees to it,
But he is weak and overcome with wine,
And caught as if with bird-lime by the cup, 430
He claps his wings and crows in doting joy.
You who are young escape with me, and find
Bacchus your ancient friend; unsuited he

To this rude Cyclops.

CHORUS.

Oh my dearest friend,
That I could see that day, and leave for ever
The impious Cyclops.

435

* * * *

ULYSSES.

Listen then what a punishment I have
For this fell monster, how secure a flight
From your hard servitude.

CHORUS.

O sweeter far
Than is the music of an Asian lyre
Would be the news of Polypheme destroyed.

440

ULYSSES.

Delighted with the Bacchic drink he goes
To call his brother Cyclops—who inhabit
A village upon Ætna not far off.

CHORUS.

I understand, catching him when alone
You think by some measure to dispatch him,
Or thrust him from the precipice.

445

ULYSSES.

O no;
Nothing of that kind; my device is subtle.

CHORUS.

How then? I heard of old that thou wert wise.

ULYSSES.

I will dissuade him from this plan, by saying
It were unwise to give the Cyclopeses
This precious drink, which if enjoyed alone
Would make life sweeter for a longer time.
When vanquished by the Bacchic power, he sleeps,
There is a trunk of olive wood within,
Whose point having made sharp with this good sword
I will conceal in fire, and when I see
It is alight, will fix it, burning yet,
Within the socket of the Cyclops' eye
And melt it out with fire—as when a man

450

455

460

Turns by its handle a great auger round,
 Fitting the framework of a ship with beams,
 So will I, in the Cyclops' fiery eye
 Turn round the brand and dry the pupil up.

CHORUS.

Joy! I am mad with joy at your device.

465

ULYSSES.

And then with you, my friends, and the old man,
 We'll load the hollow depth of our black ship,
 And row with double strokes from this dread shore.

CHORUS.

May I, as in libations to a God,
 Share in the blinding him with the red brand?
 I would have some communion in his death.

470

ULYSSES.

Doubtless: the brand is a great brand to hold.

CHORUS.

Oh! I would lift an hundred waggon-loads,
 If like a wasp's nest I could scoop the eye out
 Of the detested Cyclops.

ULYSSES.

Silence now!

475

Ye know the close device—and when I call,
 Look ye obey the masters of the craft.
 I will not save myself and leave behind
 My comrades in the cave: I might escape,
 Having got clear from that obscure recess,
 But 'twere unjust to leave in jeopardy
 The dear companions who sailed here with me.

480

CHORUS.

Come! who is first, that with his hand
 Will urge down the burning brand
 Through the lids, and quench and pierce
 The Cyclops' eye so fiery fierce?

485

SEMICHORUS I.

Song within.

Listen! listen! he is coming,
 A most hideous discord humming.
 Drunken, museless, awkward, yelling,

Far along his rocky dwelling ; 490
 Let us with some comic spell
 Teach the yet unteachable.
 By all means he must be blinded,
 If my council be but minded.

SEMICHORUS II.

Happy those made odorous 495
 With the dew which sweet grapes weep,
 To the village hastening thus,
 Seek the vines that soothe to sleep,
 Having first embraced thy friend,
 There in luxury without end, 500
 With the strings of yellow hair,
 Of thy voluptuous leman fair,
 Shalt sit playing on a bed!—
 Speak what door is openèd ?

CYCLOPS.

Ha! ha! ha! I'm full of wine, 505
 Heavy with the joy divine,
 With the young feast oversated,
 Like a merchant's vessel freighted
 To the water's edge, my crop
 Is laden to the gullet's top. 510
 The fresh meadow grass of spring
 Tempts me forth thus wandering
 To my brothers on the mountains,
 Who shall share the wine's sweet fountains.
 Bring the cask, O stranger, bring! 515

CHORUS.

One with eyes the fairest
 Cometh from his dwelling
 Some one loves thee, rarest,
 Bright beyond my telling.
 In thy grace thou shinest 520
 Like some nymph divinest,
 In her caverns dewy:—
 All delights pursue thee,
 Soon pied flowers, sweet-breathing,
 Shall thy head be wreathing. 525

ULYSSES.

Listen, O Cyclops, for I am well skilled
In Bacchus, whom I gave thee of to drink.

CYCLOPS.

What sort of God is Bacchus then accounted?

ULYSSES.

The greatest among men for joy of life.

CYCLOPS.

I gulpt him down with very great delight.

530

ULYSSES.

This is a God who never injures men.

CYCLOPS.

How does the God like living in a skin?

ULYSSES.

He is content wherever he is put.

CYCLOPS.

Gods should not have their body in a skin.

ULYSSES.

If he gives joy, what is his skin to you?

535

CYCLOPS.

I hate the skin, but love the wine within.

ULYSSES.

Stay here, now drink, and make your spirit glad.

CYCLOPS.

Should I not share this liquor with my brothers?

ULYSSES.

Keep it yourself, and be more honoured so.

CYCLOPS.

I were more useful, giving to my friends.

540

ULYSSES.

But village mirth breeds contests, broils, and blows.

CYCLOPS.

When I am drunk none shall lay hands on me.—

ULYSSES.

A drunken man is better within doors.

CYCLOPS.

He is a fool, who drinking, loves not mirth.

ULYSSES.

But he is wise, who drunk, remains at home. 545

CYCLOPS.

What shall I do, Silenus? Shall I stay?

SILENUS.

Stay—for what need have you of pot companions?

CYCLOPS.

Indeed this place is closely carpeted
With flowers and grass.

SILENUS.

And in the sun-warm noon
'Tis sweet to drink. Lie down beside me now, 550
Placing your mighty sides upon the ground.

CYCLOPS.

What do you put the cup behind me for?

SILENUS.

That no one here may touch it.

CYCLOPS.

Thievish one!

You want to drink;—here place it in the midst.
And thou, O stranger, tell how art thou called? 555

ULYSSES.

My name is Nobody. What favour now
Shall I receive to praise you at your hands?

CYCLOPS.

I'll feast on you the last of your companions.

ULYSSES.

You grant your guest a fair reward, O Cyclops.

CYCLOPS.

Ha! what is this? Stealing the wine, you rogue! 560

SILENUS.

It was this stranger kissing me because
I looked so beautiful.

CYCLOPS.

You shall repent
For kissing the coy wine that loves you not.

SILENUS.

By Jupiter! you said that I am fair.

CYCLOPS.

Pour out, and only give me the cup full.

565

SILENUS.

How is it mixed? let me observe.

CYCLOPS.

Curse you!

Give it me so.

SILENUS.

Not till I see you wear
That coronal, and taste the cup to you.

CYCLOPS.

Thou wily traitor!

SILENUS.

But the wine is sweet.

Aye, you will roar if you are caught in drinking.

570

CYCLOPS.

See now, my lip is clean and all my beard.

SILENUS.

Now put your elbow right and drink again.

As you see me drink—* * * *

CYCLOPS.

How now?

SILENUS.

Ye Gods, what a delicious gulp!

CYCLOPS.

Guest, take it;—you pour out the wine for me.

575

ULYSSES.

The wine is well accustomed to my hand.

CYCLOPS.

Pour out the wine!

ULYSSES.

I pour; only be silent.

CYCLOPS.

Silence is a hard task to him who drinks.

ULYSSES.

Take it and drink it off; leave not a dreg.

O, that the drinker died with his own draught!

580

CYCLOPS.

Papai! the vine must be a sapient plant.

ULYSSES.

If you drink much after a mighty feast,
Moistening your thirsty maw, you will sleep well;
If you leave aught, Bacchus will dry you up.

CYCLOPS.

Ho! ho! I can scarce rise. What pure delight! 555
The heavens and earth appear to whirl about
Confusedly. I see the throne of Jove
And the clear congregation of the Gods.
Now if the Graces tempted me to kiss
I would not, for the loveliest of them all 500
I would not leave this Ganymede.

SILENUS.

Polypheme,

I am the Ganymede of Jupiter.

CYCLOPS.

By Jove you are; I bore you off from Dardanus.
* * * *

ULYSSES *and the* CHORUS.

ULYSSES.

Come, boys of Bacchus, children of high race,
This man within is folded up in sleep, 505
And soon will vomit flesh from his fell maw;
The brand under the shed thrusts out its smoke,
No preparation needs, but to burn out
The monster's eye;—but bear yourselves like men.

CHORUS.

We will have courage like the adamant rock, 600
All things are ready for you here; go in,
Before our father shall perceive the noise.

ULYSSES.

Vulcan, -Ætnean king! burn out with fire
The shining eye of this thy neighbouring monster!
And thou, O sleep, nursling of gloomy night, 605
Descend unmixed on this God-hated beast,
And suffer not Ulysses and his comrades,
Returning from their famous Trojan toils,
To perish by this man, who cares not either
For God or mortal; or I needs must think 610

That Chance is a supreme divinity,
And things divine are subject to her power.

CHORUS.

Soon a crab the throat will seize
Of him who feeds upon his guest,
Fire will burn his lamp-like eyes 615
In revenge of such a feast!
A great oak stump now is lying
In the ashes yet undying.

Come, Maron, come!
Raging let him fix the doom, 620
Let him tear the eyelid up
Of the Cyclops—that his cup
May be evil!

O, I long to dance and revel
With sweet Bromian, long desired, 625
In loved ivy wreaths attired;
Leaving this abandoned home—
Will the moment ever come?

ULYSSES.

Be silent, ye wild things! Nay, hold your peace,
And keep your lips quite close; dare not to breathe,
Or spit, or e'en wink, lest ye wake the monster, 631
Until his eye be tortured out with fire.

CHORUS.

Nay, we are silent, and we chaw the air.

ULYSSES.

Come now, and lend a hand to the great stake
Within—it is delightfully red-hot. 635

CHORUS.

You then command who first should seize the stake
To burn the Cyclops' eye, that all may share
In the great enterprise.

SEMICHORUS I.

We are too far,
We cannot at this distance from the door
Thrust fire into his eye.

SEMICHORUS II.

And we iust now

Have become lame; cannot move hand or foot.

CHORUS.

The same thing has occurred to us,—our ancles
Are sprained with standing here, I know not how.

ULYSSES.

What, sprained with standing still?

CHORUS.

And there is dust
Or ashes in our eyes, I know not whence. 645

ULYSSES.

Cowardly dogs! ye will not aid me then?

CHORUS.

With pitying my own back and my back bone,
And with not wishing all my teeth knocked out,
This cowardice comes of itself—but stay,
I know a famous Orphic incantation 650
To make the brand stick of its own accord
Into the skull of this one-eyed son of Earth.

ULYSSES.

Of old I knew ye thus by nature; now
I know ye better.—I will use the aid
Of my own comrades—yet though weak of hand 655
Speak cheerfully, that so ye may awaken
The courage of my friends with your blithe words.

CHORUS.

This I will do with peril of my life,
And blind you with my exhortations, Cyclops.
Hasten and thrust, 660
And parch up to dust,
The eye of the beast,
Who feeds on his guest.
Burn and blind
The Ætnean hind! 665
Scoop and draw,
But beware lest he claw
Your limbs near his maw.

CYCLOPS.

Ah me! my eye-sight is parched up to cinders.

CHORUS.

What a sweet pæan! sing me that again!

670

CYCLOPS.

Ah me! indeed, what woe has fallen upon me!
 But wretched nothings, think ye not to flee
 Out of this rock; I, standing at the outlet,
 Will bar the way and catch you as you pass.

CHORUS.

What are you roaring out, Cyclops?

CYCLOPS.

I perish!

675

CHORUS.

For you are wicked.

CYCLOPS.

And besides miserable.

CHORUS.

What, did you fall into the fire when drunk?

CYCLOPS.

'Twas Nobody destroyed me.

CHORUS.

Why then no one

Can be to blame.

CYCLOPS.

I say 'twas Nobody .

Who blinded me.

CHORUS.

Why then you are not blind.

680

CYCLOPS.

I wish you were as blind as I am.

CHORUS.

Nay,

It cannot be that no one made you blind.

CYCLOPS.

You jeer me; where, I ask, is Nobody?

CHORUS.

No where, O Cyclops.

CYCLOPS.

It was that stranger ruined me:—the wretch
 First gave me wine and then burnt out my eye,

685

For wine is strong and hard to struggle with.
Have they escaped, or are they yet within?

CHORUS.

They stand under the darkness of the rock
And cling to it.

CYCLOPS.

At my right hand or left?

690

CHORUS.

Close on your right.

CYCLOPS.

Where?

CHORUS.

Near the rock itself.

You have them.

CYCLOPS.

Oh, misfortune on misfortune!

I've cracked my skull.

CHORUS.

Now they escape you there.

CYCLOPS.

Not there, although you say so.

CHORUS.

Not on that side.

CYCLOPS.

Where then?

CHORUS.

They creep about you on your left.

695

CYCLOPS.

Ah! I am mocked! They jeer me in my ills.

CHORUS.

Not there! he is a little there beyond you.

CYCLOPS.

Detested wretch! where are you?

ULYSSES.

Far from you

I keep with care this body of Ulysses.

CYCLOPS.

What do you say? You proffer a new name.

700

ULYSSES.

My father named me so; and I have taken
 A full revenge for your unnatural feast;
 I should have done ill to have burned down Troy
 And not revenged the murder of my comrades.

CYCLOPS.

Ai! ai! the ancient oracle is accomplished; 705
 It said that I should have my eye-sight blinded
 By you coming from Troy, yet it foretold
 That you should pay the penalty for this
 By wandering long over the homeless sea.

ULYSSES.

I bid thee weep—consider what I say, 710
 I go towards the shore to drive my ship
 To mine own land, o'er the Sicilian wave.

CYCLOPS.

Not so, if whelming you with this huge stone
 I can crush you and all your men together;
 I will descend upon the shore, though blind, 715
 Groping my way adown the steep ravine.

CHORUS.

And we, the shipmates of Ulysses now,
 Will serve our Bacchus all our happy lives.

EPIGRAMS.

TO STELLA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF PLATO.

THOU wert the morning star among the living,
 Ere thy fair light had fled;—
 Now, having died, thou art, as Hesperus, giving
 New splendour to the dead.

KISSING HELENA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF PLATO.

KISSING Helena, together
With my kiss, my soul beside it
Came to my lips, and there I kept it,—
For the poor thing had wandered thither,
To follow where the kiss should guide it,
O, cruel I, to intercept it!

SPIRIT OF PLATO.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK.

EAGLE! why soarest thou above that tomb?
To what sublime and star-y-paven home
Floatest thou?
I am the image of swift Plato's spirit,
Ascending heaven—Athens doth inherit
His corpse below.

CIRCUMSTANCE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK.

A MAN who was about to hang himself,
Finding a purse, then threw away his rope;
The owner, coming to reclaim his pelf,
The halter found and used it. So is Hope
Changed for Despair—one laid upon the shelf,
We take the other. Under heaven's high cope
Fortune is God—all you endure and do
Depends on circumstance as much as you.

FRAGMENT OF THE
ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF ADONIS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF BION.

I MOURN Adonis dead—loveliest Adonis—
Dead, dead Adonis—and the Loves lament.—
Sleep no more Venus, wrapt in purple woof—
Wake violet-stolèd queen, and weave the crown
Of Death,—’tis Misery calls,—for he is dead. 5

The lovely one lies wounded in the mountains,
His white thigh struck with the white tooth; he scarce
Yet breathes; and Venus hangs in agony there.
The dark blood wanders o’er his snowy limbs,
His eyes beneath their lids are lustreless, 10
The rose has fled from his wan lips, and there
That kiss is dead, which Venus gathers yet.

A deep deep wound Adonis . . .
A deeper Venus bears upon her heart.
See, his belovèd dogs are gathering round— 15
The Oread nymphs are weeping—Aphrodite
With hair unbound is wandering thro’ the woods,
Wildered, ungirt, unsandalled—the thorns pierce
Her hastening feet and drink her sacred blood.
Bitterly screaming out she is driven on 20
Thro’ the long vales; and her Assyrian boy,
Her love, her husband calls—the purple blood
From her struck thigh stains her white navel now,
Her bosom, and her neck before like snow.

Alas for Cytherea—the Loves mourn— 25
The lovely, the beloved is gone—and now
Her sacred beauty vanishes away.
For Venus whilst Adonis lived was fair—
Alas her loveliness is dead with him.
The oaks and mountains cry Ai! ai! Adonis! 30

The springs their waters change to tears and weep—
The flowers are withered up with grief . . .

Ai! ai!	Adonis is dead	
Echo resounds	Adonis dead.	
Who will weep not thy dreadful woe O Venus?		35
Soon as she saw and knew the mortal wound		
Of her Adonis—saw the life blood flow		
From his fair thigh, now wasting, wailing loud		
She clasped him and cried	Stay, Adonis!	
Stay dearest one, . . .		40
	and mix my lips with thine—	
Wake yet a while Adonis—oh but once,		
That I may kiss thee now for the last time—		
But for as long as one short kiss may live—		
O let thy breath flow from thy dying soul		45
Even to my mouth and heart, that I may suck		
That . . .		

FRAGMENT OF THE

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF BION.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF MOSCHUS.

YE Dorian woods and waves lament aloud,—
Augment your tide, O streams, with fruitless tears,
For the belovèd Bion is no more.
Let every tender herb and plant and flower,
From each dejected bud and drooping bloom,
Shed dews of liquid sorrow, and with breath
Of melancholy sweetness on the wind
Diffuse its languid love; let roses blush,
Anemones grow paler for the loss .
Their dells have known; and thou, O hyacinth,
Utter thy legend now—yet more, dumb flower,
Than “ah! alas!”—thine is no common grief—
Bion the [sweetest singer] is no more.

PAN, ECHO, AND THE SATYR.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF MOSCHUS.

PAN loved his neighbour Echo—but that child
 Of Earth and Air pined for the Satyr leaping;
 The Satyr loved with wasting madness wild
 The bright nymph Lyda,—and so three went weeping.
 As Pan loved Echo, Echo loved the Satyr,
 The Satyr Lyda—and so love consumed them.—
 And thus to each—which was a woeful matter—
 To bear what they inflicted Justice doomed them;
 For in as much as each might hate the lover,
 Each loving, so was hated.—Ye that love not
 Be warned—in thought turn this example over,
 That when ye love—the like return ye prove not.

FRAGMENT OF THE TENTH ECLOGUE.

[v. 1-26.]

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN OF VIRGIL.

MELODIOUS Arethusa, o'er my verse
 Shed thou once more the spirit of thy stream:
 Who denies verse to Gallus? So, when thou
 Glidest beneath the green and purple gleam
 Of Syracusan waters, mayst thou flow 5
 Unmingled with the bitter Doric dew!
 Begin, and, whilst the goats are browsing now
 The soft leaves, in our way let us pursue
 The melancholy loves of Gallus. List!
 We sing not to the dead: the wild woods knew 10
 His sufferings, and their echoes..
 Young Naiads, .. in what far woodlands wild
 Wandered ye when unworthy love possessed
 Your Gallus? Not where Pindus is up-piled,
 Nor where Parnassus' sacred mount, nor where 15
 Aonian Aganippe expands...

The laurels and the myrtle-copses dim.

The pine-encircled mountain, Mænalus,

The cold crags of Lycæus, weep for him ;

And Sylvan, crowned with rustic coronals, 20

Came shaking in his speed the budding wands

And heavy lilies which he bore : we knew
Pan the Arcadian.

* * * * *

What madness is this, Gallus ? Thy heart's care

With willing steps pursues another there. 25

THE FIRST CANZONE OF

THE CONVITO.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF DANTE.

I.

YE who intelligent the third heaven move,

Hear the discourse which is within my heart,

Which cannot be declared, it seems so new ;

The Heaven whose course follows your power and art,

O gentle creatures that ye are ! me drew, 5

And therefore may I dare to speak to you,

Even of the life which now I live—and yet

I pray that ye will hear me when I cry,

And tell of mine own heart this novelty ;

How the lamenting spirit moans in it, 10

And how a voice there murmurs against her

Who came on the refulgence of your sphere.

II.

A sweet thought, which was once the life within

This heavy heart, many a time and oft

Went up before our Father's feet, and there 15

It saw a glorious Lady throned aloft ;

And its sweet talk of her my soul did win,

So that I said, Thither I too will fare.

That thought is fled, and one doth now appear

Which tyrannizes me with such fierce stress, 20

That my heart trembles—ye may see it leap—
 And on another Lady bids me keep
 Mine eyes, and says—Who would have blessedness
 Let him but look upon that lady's eyes,
 Let him not fear the agony of sighs.

25

III.

This lowly thought, which once would talk with me
 Of a bright seraph sitting crowned on high,
 Found such a cruel foe it died, and so
 My spirit wept, the grief is hot even now—
 And said, Alas for me! how swift could flee
 That piteous thought which did my life console!
 And the afflicted one questioning
 Mine eyes, if such a lady saw they never,
 And why they would...

30

I said, beneath those eyes might stand for ever
 He whom regards must kill with...
 To have known their power stood me in little stead,
 Those eyes have looked on me, and I am dead.

35

IV.

Thou art not dead, but thou hast wanderèd,
 Thou soul of ours, who thyself dost fret,
 A spirit of gentle love beside me said;
 For that fair lady, whom thou dost regret,
 Hath so transformed the life which thou hast led,
 Thou scornest it, so worthless art thou made.
 And see how meek, how pitiful, how staid,
 Yet courteous, in her majesty she is.

40

45

And still call thou her woman in thy thought;
 Her whom, if thou thyself deceivest not,
 Thou wilt behold decked with such loveliness,
 That thou wilt cry [Love] only Lord, lo here
 Thy handmaiden, do what thou wilt with her.

50

V.

My song, I fear that thou wilt find but few
 Who fitly shall conceive thy reasoning
 Of such hard matter dost thou entertain.
 Whence, if by misadventure chance should bring
 Thee to base company, as chance may do,

55

Quite unaware of what thou dost contain,
 I prithee comfort thy sweet self again,
 My last delight; tell them that they are dull,
 And bid them own that thou art beautiful. 60

MATILDA GATHERING FLOWERS.

FROM THE PURGATORIO OF DANTE, CANTO XXVIII, l. 1-51.

AND earnest to explore within—around
 The divine wood, whose thick green living woof
 Tempered the young day to the sight—I wound
 Up the green slope, beneath the forest's roof,
 With slow soft steps leaving the mountain's steep, 5
 And sought those inmost labyrinths, motion-proof
 Against the air, that in that stillness deep
 And solemn, struck upon my forehead bare,
 The slow soft stroke of a continuous . . .
 In which the leaves tremblingly were 10
 All bent towards that part where earliest
 The sacred hill obscures the morning air.
 Yet were they not so shaken from the rest,
 But that the birds, perched on the utmost spray,
 Incessantly renewing their blithe quest, 15
 With perfect joy received the early day,
 Singing within the glancing leaves, whose sound
 Kept a low burden to their roundelay,
 Such as from bough to bough gathers around
 The pine forest on bleak Chiassi's shore, 20
 When Æolus Scirocco has unbound.
 My slow steps had already borne me o'er
 Such space within the antique wood, that I
 Perceived not where I entered any more,
 When, lo! a stream whose little waves went by, 25
 Bending towards the left through grass that grew
 Upon its bank, impeded suddenly

My going on. Water of purest hue
On earth, would appear turbid and impure
Compared with this, whose unconcealing dew, 30

Dark, dark, yet clear, moved under the obscure
Eternal shades, whose interwoven looms
The rays of moon or sunlight ne'er endure.

I moved not with my feet, but 'mid the glooms
Pierced with my charmed eye contemplating 35
The mighty multitude of fresh May blooms

That starred that night, when, even as a thing
That suddenly for blank astonishment
Charms every sense, and makes all thought take wing,

A solitary woman! and she went 40
Singing and gathering flower after flower,
With which her way was painted and besprent.

Bright lady, who, if looks had ever power
To bear true witness of the heart within,
Dost bask under the beams of love, come lower 45

Towards this bank. I prithee let me win
This much of thee, to come, that I may hear
Thy song: like Proserpine, in Enna's glen,

Thou seemest to my fancy, singing here
And gathering flowers, as that fair maiden when 50
She lost the spring, and Ceres her more dear.

FRAGMENT.

ADAPTED FROM THE VITA NUOVA OF DANTE.

WHAT Mary is when she a little smiles
I cannot even tell or call to mind,
It is a miracle, so new, so rare.

SONNET.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF CAVALCANTI.

GUIDO CAVALCANTI TO DANTE ALIGHIERI.

RETURNING from its daily quest, my Spirit
 Changed thoughts and vile in thee doth weep to find:
 It grieves me that thy mild and gentle mind
 Those ample virtues which it did inherit
 Has lost. Once thou didst loath the multitude
 Of blind and madding men—I then loved thee—
 I loved thy lofty songs and that sweet mood
 When thou wert faithful to thyself and me.
 I dare not now thro' thy degraded state
 Own the delight thy strains inspire—in vain
 I seek what once thou wert—we cannot meet
 As we were wont. Again and yet again
 Ponder my words: so the false Spirit shall fly
 And leave to thee thy true integrity.

SCENES FROM THE MAGICO PRODIGIOSO.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH OF CALDERON.

SCENE I.

*Enter CYPRIAN, dressed as a Student; CLARIN and MOSCON
 as poor Scholars, with books.*

CYPRIAN.

IN the sweet solitude of this calm place,
 This intricate wild wilderness of trees
 And flowers and undergrowth of odorous plants,
 Leave me; the books you brought out of the house
 To me are ever best society.
 And while with glorious festival and song,
 Antioch now celebrates the consecration
 Of a proud temple to great Jupiter,
 And bears his image in loud jubilee

To its new shrine, I would consume what still 10
 Lives of the dying day, in studious thought,
 Far from the throng and turmoil. You, my friends,
 Go, and enjoy the festival; it will
 Be worth your pains. You may return for me
 When the sun seeks its grave among the billows, 15
 Hid among dim grey clouds on the horizon,
 Which dance like plumes upon a hearse;—and here
 I shall expect you.

MOSCON.

I cannot bring my mind,
 Great as my haste to see the festival
 Certainly is, to leave you, Sir, without 20
 Just saying some three or four thousand words.
 How is it possible that on a day
 Of such festivity, you can be content
 To come forth to a solitary country
 With three or four old books, and turn your back 25
 On all this mirth?

CLARIN.

My master's in the right;
 There is not anything more tiresome
 Than a procession day, with troops, and priests,
 And dances, and all that.

MOSCON.

From first to last,
 Clarin, you are a temporizing flatterer; 30
 You praise not what you feel but what he does;—
 Toadeater!

CLARIN.

You lie—under a mistake—
 For this is the most civil sort of lie
 That can be given to a man's face. I now
 Say what I think.

CYPRIAN.

Enough, you foolish fellows! 35
 Puffed up with your own doting ignorance,
 You always take the two sides of one question.
 Now go; and as I said, return for me
 When night falls, veiling in its shadows wide

This glorious fabric of the universe,

40

MOSCON.

How happens it, although you can maintain
The folly of enjoying festivals,
That yet you go there?

CLARIN.

Nay, the consequence
Is clear:—who ever did what he advises
Others to do?—

MOSCON.

Would that my feet were wings, 45
So would I fly to Livia. [Exit.

CLARIN.

To speak truth,
Livia is she who has surprised my heart;
But he is more than half way there.—Soho!
Livia, I come; good sport, Livia, Soho! [Exit.

CYPRIAN.

Now, since I am alone, let me examine 50
The question which has long disturbed my mind
With doubt, since first I read in Plinius
The words of mystic import and deep sense
In which he defines God. My intellect
Can find no God with whom these marks and signs 55
Fitly agree. It is a hidden truth
Which I must fathom.

(CYPRIAN reads; the DÆMON, dressed in a Court dress, enters.)

DÆMON.

Search even as thou wilt,
But thou shalt never find what I can hide.

CYPRIAN.

What noise is that among the boughs? Who moves?
What art thou?—

DÆMON.

'Tis a foreign gentleman. 60
Even from this morning I have lost my way
In this wild place; and my poor horse at last,
Quite overcome, has stretched himself upon
The enamelled tapestry of this mossy mountain,

And feeds and rests at the same time. I was 65
 Upon my way to Antioch upon business
 Of some importance, but wrapt up in cares
 (Who is exempt from this inheritance?)
 I parted from my company, and lost
 My way, and lost my servants and my comrades. 70

CYPRIAN.

'Tis singular that even within the sight
 Of the high towers of Antioch you could lose
 Your way. Of all the avenues and green paths
 Of this wild wood there is not one but leads,
 As to its centre, to the walls of Antioch; 75
 Take which you will you cannot miss your road.

DÆMON.

And such is ignorance! Even in the sight
 Of knowledge, it can draw no profit from it.
 But as it still is early, and as I
 Have no acquaintances in Antioch, 80
 Being a stranger there, I will even wait
 The few surviving hours of the day,
 Until the night shall conquer it. I see
 Both by your dress and by the books in which
 You find delight and company, that you 85
 Are a great student;—for my part, I feel
 Much sympathy in such pursuits.

CYPRIAN.

Have you
 Studied much?

DÆMON.

No,—and yet I know enough
 Not to be wholly ignorant.

CYPRIAN.

Pray, Sir,
 What science may you know?—

DÆMON.

Many.

CYPRIAN.

Alas!
 Much pains must we expend on one alone, 90

And even then attain it not;—but you
Have the presumption to assert that you
Know many without study.

DÆMON.

And with truth.
For in the country whence I come the sciences 93
Require no learning,—they are known.

CYPRIAN.

O! would
I were of that bright country! for in this
The more we study, we the more discover
Our ignorance.

DÆMON.

It is so true, that I
Had so much arrogance as to oppose 100
The chair of the most high Professorship,
And obtained many votes, and though I lost,
The attempt was still more glorious, than the failure
Could be dishonourable. If you believe not,
Let us refer it to dispute respecting 105
That which you know the best, and although I
Know not the opinion you maintain, and though
It be the true one, I will take the contrary.

CYPRIAN.

The offer gives me pleasure. I am now
Debating with myself upon a passage 110
Of Plinius, and my mind is racked with doubt
To understand and know who is the God
Of whom he speaks.

DÆMON.

It is a passage, if
I recollect it right, couched in these words:
“God is one supreme goodness, one pure essence, 115
One substance, and one sense, all sight, all hands.”

CYPRIAN.

'Tis true.

DÆMON.

What difficulty find you here?

CYPRIAN.

I do not recognize among the Gods
 The God defined by Plinius; if he must
 Be supreme goodness, even Jupiter 120
 Is not supremely good; because we see
 His deeds are evil, and his attributes
 Tainted with mortal weakness; in what manner
 Can supreme goodness be consistent with
 The passions of humanity?

DÆMON.

The wisdom 125
 Of the old world masked with the names of Gods
 The attributes of Nature and of Man;
 A sort of popular philosophy.

CYPRIAN.

This reply will not satisfy me, for
 Such awe is due to the high name of God 130
 That ill should never be imputed. Then,
 Examining the question with more care,
 It follows, that the Gods would always will
 That which is best, were they supremely good.
 How then does one will one thing, one another? 135
 And that you may not say that I allege
 Poetical or philosophic learning:—
 Consider the ambiguous responses
 Of their oracular statues; from two shrines
 Two armies shall obtain the assurance of 140
 One victory. Is it not indisputable
 That two contending wills can never lead
 To the same end? And being opposite,
 If one be good is not the other evil?
 Evil in God is inconceivable; 145
 But supreme goodness fails among the Gods
 Without their union.

DÆMON.

I deny your major.
 These responses are means towards some end
 Unfathomed by our intellectual beam.
 They are the work of providence, and more 150
 The battle's loss may profit those who lose,

Than victory advantage those who win.

CYPRIAN.

That I admit; and yet that God should not
(Falsehood is incompatible with deity)
Assure the victory; it would be enough 155
To have permitted the defeat. If God
Be all sight,—God, who had beheld the truth,
Would not have given assurance of an end
Never to be accomplished: thus, although
The Deity may according to his attributes 160
Be well distinguished into persons, yet
Even in the minutest circumstance
His essence must be one.

DÆMON.

To attain the end
The affections of the actors in the scene
Must have been thus influenced by his voice. 165

CYPRIAN.

But for a purpose thus subordinate
He might have employed Genii, good or evil,—
A sort of spirits called so by the learned,
Who roam about inspiring good or evil,
And from whose influence and existence we 170
May well infer our immortality.
Thus God might easily, without descent
To a gross falsehood in his proper person,
Have moved the affections by this mediation
To the just point.

DÆMON.

These trifling contradictions 175
Do not suffice to impugn the unity
Of the high Gods; in things of great importance
They still appear unanimous; consider
That glorious fabric man,—his workmanship
Is stamped with one conception.

CYPRIAN.

Who made man 180
Must have, methinks, the advantage of the others.
If they are equal, might they not have risen
In opposition to the work, and being

All hands, according to our author here,
 Have still destroyed even as the other made? 185
 If equal in their power, unequal only
 In opportunity, which of the two
 Will remain conqueror?

DÆMON.

On impossible
 And false hypothesis there can be built
 No argument. Say, what do you infer 190
 From this?

CYPRIAN.

That there must be a mighty God
 Of supreme goodness and of highest grace,
 All sight, all hands, all truth, infallible,
 Without an equal and without a rival,
 The cause of all things and the effect of nothing, 195
 One power, one will, one substance, and one essence.
 And in whatever persons, one or two,
 His attributes may be distinguished, one
 Sovereign power, one solitary essence,
 One cause of all cause. [*They rise.*]

DÆMON.

How can I impugn 200
 So clear a consequence?

CYPRIAN.

Do you regret
 My victory?

DÆMON.

Who but regrets a check
 In rivalry of wit? I could reply
 And urge new difficulties, but will now
 Depart, for I hear steps of men approaching, 205
 And it is time that I should now pursue
 My journey to the city.

CYPRIAN.

Go in peace!

DÆMON.

Remain in peace!—Since thus it profits him
 To study, I will wrap his senses up

In sweet oblivion of all thought, but of 210
 A piece of excellent beauty; and as I
 Have power given me to wage enmity
 Against Justina's soul, I will extract
 From one effect two vengeance. [*Aside and exit.*]

CYPRIAN.

I never
 Met a more learnèd person. Let me now 215
 Revolve this doubt again with careful mind.

He reads. FLORO and LELIO enter.

LELIO.

Here stop. These toppling rocks and tangled boughs,
 Impenetrable by the noonday beam,
 Shall be sole witnesses of what we——

FLORO.

Draw!
 If there were words, here is the place for deeds. 220

LELIO.

Thou needest not instruct me; well I know
 That in the field, the silent tongue of steel
 Speaks thus,— [*They fight.*]

CYPRIAN.

Ha! what is this? Lelio,—Floro,
 Be it enough that Cyprian stands between you,
 Although unarmed.

LELIO.

Whence comest thou, to stand 225
 Between me and my vengeance?

FLORO.

From what rocks
 And desert cells?

Enter MOSCON and CLARIN.

MOSCON.

Run! run! for where we left
 My master, I now hear the clash of swords.

CLARIN.

I never run to approach things of this sort,
 But only to avoid them. Sir! Cyprian! sir! 230

CYPRIAN.

Be silent, fellows! What! two friends who are
 In blood and fame the eyes and hope of Antioch,
 One of the noble race of the Colalti,
 The other son o' the Governor, adventure
 And cast away, on some slight cause no doubt, 235
 Two lives, the honour of their country?

LELIO.

Cyprian!

Although my high respect towards your person
 Holds now my sword suspended, thou canst not
 Restore it to the slumber of the scabbard:
 Thou knowest more of science than the duel; 240
 For when two men of honour take the field,
 No counsel nor respect can make them friends
 But one must die in the dispute.

FLORO.

I pray

That you depart hence with your people, and
 Leave us to finish what we have begun 245
 Without advantage.—

CYPRIAN.

Though you may imagine

That I know little of the laws of duel,
 Which vanity and valour instituted,
 You are in error. By my birth I am
 Held no less than yourselves to know the limits 250
 Of honour and of infamy, nor has study
 Quenched the free spirit which first ordered them;
 And thus to me, as one well experienced
 In the false quicksands of the sea of honour,
 You may refer the merits of the case; 255
 And if I should perceive in your relation
 That either has the right to satisfaction
 From the other, I give you my word of honour
 To leave you.

LELIO.

Under this condition then
 I will relate the cause, and you will cede 260
 And must confess th' impossibility

Of compromise; for the same lady is
Beloved by Floro and myself.

FLORO.

It seems
Much to me that the light of day should look
Upon that idol of my heart—but he——
Leave us to fight, according to thy word.

263

CYPRIAN.

Permit one question further: is the lady
Impossible to hope or not?

LELIO.

She is
So excellent, that if the light of day
Should excite Floro's jealousy, it were
Without just cause, for even the light of day
Trembles to gaze on her.

20

CYPRIAN.

Would you for your

Part, marry her?

FLORO.

Such is my confidence.

CYPRIAN.

And you?

LELIO.

Oh! would that I could lift my hope
So high, for though she is extremely poor,
Her virtue is her dowry.

275

CYPRIAN.

And if you both
Would marry her, is it not weak and vain,
Culpable and unworthy, thus beforehand
To slur her honour? What would the world say
If one should slay the other, and if she
Should afterwards espouse the murderer?

283

*The rivals agree to refer their quarrel to CYPRIAN; who
in consequence visits JUSTINA, and becomes enamoured of her:
she disdains him, and he retires to a solitary sea-shore.*

SCENE II.

CYPRIAN.

Oh, memory! permit it not
 That the tyrant of my thought
 Be another soul that still
 Holds dominion o'er the will,
 That would refuse, but can no more, 5
 To bend, to tremble, and adore.
 Vain idolatry!—I saw,
 And gazing, became blind with error;
 Weak ambition, which the awe
 Of her presence bound to terror! 10
 So beautiful she was—and I,
 Between my love and jealousy,
 Am so convulsed with hope and fear,
 Unworthy as it may appear;—
 So bitter is the life I live, 15
 That, hear me, Hell! I now would give
 To thy most detested spirit
 My soul, for ever to inherit,
 To suffer punishment and pine,
 So this woman may be mine. 20
 Hear'st thou, Hell! dost thou reject it?
 My soul is offered!

DÆMON (*unseen*).

I accept it.

[Tempest, with thunder and lightning.]

CYPRIAN.

What is this? ye heavens for ever pure,
 At once intensely radiant and obscure!
 Athwart the æthærial halls 25
 The lightning's arrow and the thunder-balls
 The day affright.
 As from the horizon round,
 Burst with earthquake sound,
 In mighty torrents the electric fountains;— 30
 Clouds quench the sun, and thunder smoke

Strangles the air, and fire eclipses heaven.
 Philosophy, thou canst not even
 Compel their causes underneath thy yoke:
 From yonder clouds even to the waves below 35
 The fragments of a single ruin choke
 Imagination's flight;
 For, on flakes of surge, like feathers light,
 The ashes of the desolation cast
 Upon the gloomy blast, 40
 Tell of the footsteps of the storm.
 And nearer see the melancholy form
 Of a great ship, the outcast of the sea,
 Drives miserably!
 And it must fly the pity of the port, 45
 Or perish, and its last and sole resort
 Is its own raging enemy.
 The terror of the thrilling cry
 Was a fatal prophecy
 Of coming death, who hovers now 50
 Upon that shattered prow,
 That they who die not may be dying still.
 And not alone the insane elements
 Are populous with wild portents,
 But that sad ship is as a miracle 55
 Of sudden ruin, for it drives so fast
 It seems as if it had arrayed its form
 With the headlong storm.
 It strikes—I almost feel the shock,—
 It stumbles on a jagged rock,— 60
 Sparkles of blood on the white foam are cast.

[*A Tempest.*

All exclaim (within).

We are all lost!

DÆMON (*within*).

Now from this plank will I
 Pass to the land and thus fulfil my scheme.

CYPRIAN.

As in contempt of the elemental rage
 A man comes forth in safety, while the ship's 65
 Great form is in a watery eclipse

Obliterated from the Ocean's page,
 And round its wreck the huge sea-monsters sit,
 A horrid conclave, and the whistling wave
 Is heaped over its carcase, like a grave. 70

The DÆMON enters, as escaped from the sea.

DÆMON (*aside*).

It was essential to my purposes
 To wake a tumult on the sapphire ocean,
 That in this unknown form I might at length
 Wipe out the blot of the discomfiture
 Sustained upon the mountain, and assail 75
 With a new war the soul of Cyprian,
 Forging the instruments of his destruction
 Even from his love and from his wisdom.—Oh!
 Belovèd earth, dear mother, in thy bosom
 I seek a refuge from the monster who 80
 Precipitates itself upon me.

CYPRIAN.

Friend,

Collect thyself; and be the memory
 Of thy late suffering, and thy greatest sorrow
 But as a shadow of the past,—for nothing
 Beneath the circle of the moon, but flows 85
 And changes, and can never know repose.

DÆMON.

And who art thou, before whose feet my fate
 Has prostrated me?

CYPRIAN.

One who, moved with pity,
 Would soothe its stings.

DÆMON.

Oh! that can never be!
 No solace can my lasting sorrows find. 90

CYPRIAN.

Wherefore?

DÆMON.

Because my happiness is lost.
 Yet I lament what has long ceased to be
 The object of desire or memory,
 And my life is not life.

CYPRIAN.

Now, since the fury
 Of this earthquaking hurricane is still, 95
 And the crystalline heaven has reassumed
 Its windless calm so quickly, that it seems
 As if its heavy wrath had been awakened
 Only to overwhelm that vessel,—speak,
 Who art thou, and whence comest thou?

DÆMON.

Far more 100
 My coming hither cost, than thou hast seen
 Or I can tell. Among my misadventures
 This shipwreck is the least. Wilt thou hear?

CYPRIAN.

Speak.

DÆMON.

Since thou desirest, I will then unveil
 Myself to thee;—for in myself I am 105
 A world of happiness and misery;
 This I have lost, and that I must lament
 For ever. In my attributes I stood
 So high and so heroically great,
 In lineage so supreme, and with a genius 110
 Which penetrated with a glance the world
 Beneath my feet, that won by my high merit
 A king—whom I may call the king of kings,
 Because all others tremble in their pride
 Before the terrors of his countenance, 115
 In his high palace roofed with brightest gems
 Of living light—call them the stars of Heaven—
 Named me his counsellor. But the high praise
 Stung me with pride and envy, and I rose
 In mighty competition, to ascend 120
 His seat and place my foot triumphantly
 Upon his subject thrones. Chastised, I know
 The depth to which ambition falls; too mad
 Was the attempt, and yet more mad were now
 Repentance of the irrevocable deed:— 125
 Therefore I chose this ruin with the glory
 Of not to be subdued, before the shame

Of reconciling me with him who reigns
 By coward cession.—Nor was I alone,
 Nor am I now, nor shall I be alone; 130
 And there was hope, and there may still be hope,
 For many suffrages among his vassals
 Hailed me their lord and king, and many still
 Are mine, and many more, perchance shall be.
 Thus vanquished, though in fact victorious, 135
 I left his seat of empire, from mine eye
 Shooting forth poisonous lightning, while my words
 With inauspicious thunderings shook Heaven,
 Proclaiming vengeance, public as my wrong,
 And imprecating on his prostrate slaves 140
 Rapine, and death, and outrage. Then I sailed
 Over the mighty fabric of the world,
 A pirate ambushed in its pathless sands,
 A lynx crouched watchfully among its caves
 And craggy shores; and I have wandered over 145
 The expanse of these wide wildernesses
 In this great ship, whose bulk is now dissolved
 In the light breathings of the invisible wind,
 And which the sea has made a dustless ruin,
 Seeking ever a mountain, through whose forests 150
 I seek a man, whom I must now compel
 To keep his word with me. I came arrayed
 In tempest, and although my power could well
 Bridle the forest winds in their career,
 For other causes I forbore to soothe 155
 Their fury to Favonian gentleness;
 I could and would not; (thus I wake in him [Aside.
 A love of magic art.) Let not this tempest,
 Nor the succeeding calm excite thy wonder;
 For by my art the sun would turn as pale 160
 As his weak sister with unwonted fear.
 And in my wisdom are the orbs of Heaven
 Written as in a record; I have pierced
 The flaming circles of their wondrous spheres
 And know them as thou knowest every corner 165
 Of this dim spot. Let it not seem to thee
 That I boast vainly; wouldst thou that I work

A charm over this waste and savage wood,
 This Babylon of crags and agèd trees,
 Filling its leafy coverts with a horror 170
 Thrilling and strange? I am the friendless guest
 Of these wild oaks and pines—and as from thee
 I have received the hospitality
 Of this rude place, I offer thee the fruit
 Of years of toil in recompense; whate'er 175
 Thy wildest dream presented to thy thought
 As object of desire, that shall be thine.

* * * * *

And thenceforth shall so firm an amity
 'Twixt thee and me be, that neither fortune,
 The monstrous phantom which pursues success, 180
 That careful miser, that free prodigal,
 Who ever alternates with changeful hand,
 Evil and good, reproach and fame; nor Time,
 That loadstar of the ages, to whose beam
 The wingèd years speed o'er the intervals 185
 Of their unequal revolutions; nor
 Heaven itself, whose beautiful bright stars
 Rule and adorn the world, can ever make
 The least division between thee and me,
 Since now I find a refuge in thy favour. 190

SCENE III.

The DÆMON tempts JUSTINA, who is a Christian.

DÆMON.

Abyss of Hell! I call on thee,
 Thou wild misrule of thine own anarchy!
 From thy prison-house set free
 The spirits of voluptuous death,
 That with their mighty breath 5
 They may destroy a world of virgin thoughts;
 Let her chaste mind with fancies thick as motes
 Be peopled from thy shadowy deep,
 Till her guiltless phantasy

Full to overflowing be! 10
 And with sweetest harmony,
 Let birds, and flowers, and leaves, and all things move
 To love, only to love.

Let nothing meet her eyes
 But signs of Love's soft victories; 15
 Let nothing meet her ear
 But sounds of Love's sweet sorrow,
 So that from faith no succour she may borrow,
 But, guided by my spirit blind
 And in a magic snare entwined, 20

She may now seek Cyprian.
 Begin, while I in silence bind
 My voice, when thy sweet song thou hast began.

A VOICE (*within*).

What is the glory far above
 All else in human life?

ALL.

Love! love! 25

[*While these words are sung, the DÆMON goes out at one door, and JUSTINA enters at another.*]

THE FIRST VOICE.

There is no form in which the fire
 Of love its traces has impressed not.
 Man lives far more in love's desire
 Than by life's breath, soon possessed not.
 If all that lives must love or die, 30
 All shapes on earth, or sea, or sky,
 With one consent to Heaven cry
 That the glory far above
 All else in life is—

ALL.

Love! O love!

JUSTINA.

Thou melancholy thought which art 35
 So flattering and so sweet, to thee
 When did I give the liberty
 Thus to afflict my heart?
 What is the cause of this new power
 Which doth my fevered being move, 40

Momently raging more and more?
 What subtle pain is kindled now
 Which from my heart doth overflow
 Into my senses?—

ALL.

Love, O, love!

JUSTINA.

'Tis that enamoured nightingale 45
 Who gives me the reply;
 He ever tells the same soft tale
 Of passion and of constancy
 To his mate, who rapt and fond,
 Listening sits, a bough beyond. 50

Be silent, Nightingale—no more
 Make me think, in hearing thee
 Thus tenderly thy love deplore,
 If a bird can feel his so,
 What a man would feel for me. 55
 And, voluptuous vine, O thou
 Who seekest most when least pursuing,—
 To the trunk thou interlacest
 Art the verdure which embracest,
 And the weight which is its ruin,— 60
 No more, with green embraces, vine,
 Make me think on what thou lovest,—
 For whilst thus thy boughs entwine,
 I fear lest thou should'st teach me, sophist,
 How arms might be entangled too. 65

Light-enchanted sunflower, thou
 Who gazest ever true and tender
 On the sun's revolving splendour!
 Follow not his faithless glance
 With thy faded countenance, 70
 Nor teach my beating heart to fear,
 If leaves can mourn without a tear,
 How eyes must weep! O Nightingale,
 Cease from thy enamoured tale,—
 Leafy vine, unwreathe thy bower, 75

Restless sunflower, cease to move,—
Or tell me all, what poisonous power
Ye use against me—

ALL.

Love! love! love!

JUSTINA.

It cannot be!—Whom have I ever loved?
Trophies of my oblivion and disdain,
Floro and Lelio did I not reject?
And Cyprian?—

80

[She becomes troubled at the name of Cyprian.]

Did I not requite him
With such severity, that he has fled
Where none has ever heard of him again?—

Alas! I now begin to fear that this
May be the occasion whence desire grows bold,
As if there were no danger. From the moment
That I pronounced to my own listening heart,
Cyprian is absent, O me miserable!

85

I know not what I feel! *[More calmly.]* It must be pity
To think that such a man, whom all the world
Admired, should be forgot by all the world,
And I the cause. *[She again becomes troubled.]*

91

And yet if it were pity,
Floro and Lelio might have equal share,
For they are both imprisoned for my sake.

95

[Calmly.] Alas! what reasonings are these? it is
Enough I pity him, and that, in vain,
Without this ceremonious subtlety.

And woe is me! I know not where to find him now,
Even should I seek him through this wide world.

103

Enter DÆMON.

DÆMON.

Follow, and I will lead thee where he is.

JUSTINA.

And who art thou, who hast found entrance hither,
Into my chamber through the doors and locks?
Art thou a monstrous shadow which my madness
Has formed in the idle air?

DÆMON.

No. I am one 105
 Called by the thought which tyrannizes thee
 From his eternal dwelling; who this day
 Is pledged to bear thee unto Cyprian.

JUSTINA.

So shall thy promise fail. This agony 110
 Of passion which afflicts my heart and soul
 May sweep imagination in its storm;
 The will is firm.

DÆMON.

Already half is done
 In the imagination of an act.
 The sin incurred, the pleasure then remains;
 Let not the will stop half-way on the road. 115

JUSTINA.

I will not be discouraged, nor despair,
 Although I thought it, and although 'tis true
 That thought is but a prelude to the deed:—
 Thought is not in my power, but action is:
 I will not move my foot to follow thee. 120

DÆMON.

But a far mightier wisdom than thine own
 Exerts itself within thee, with such power
 Compelling thee to that which it inclines
 That it shall force thy step; how wilt thou then
 Resist, Justina?

JUSTINA.

By my free-will.

DÆMON.

I

125

Must force thy will.

JUSTINA.

It is invincible;
 It were not free if thou hadst power upon it.

[He draws, but cannot move her.]

DÆMON.

Come, where a pleasure waits thee.

JUSTINA.

It were bought

Too dear.

DÆMON.

'Twill soothe thy heart to softest peace.

JUSTINA.

'Tis dread captivity.

DÆMON.

'Tis joy, 'tis glory.

130

JUSTINA.

'Tis shame, 'tis torment, 'tis despair.

DÆMON.

But how

Canst thou defend thyself from that or me,

If my power drags thee onward?

JUSTINA.

My defence

Consists in God.

[He vainly endeavours to force her, and at last releases her.]

DÆMON.

Woman, thou hast subdued me,

Only by not owning thyself subdued.

135

But since thou thus findest defence in God,

I will assume a feignèd form, and thus

Make thee a victim of my baffled rage.

For I will mask a spirit in thy form

Who will betray thy name to infamy,

140

And doubly shall I triumph in thy loss,

First by dishonouring thee, and then by turning

False pleasure to true ignominy. *[Exit.]*

JUSTINA.

I

Appeal to Heaven against thee; so that Heaven

May scatter thy delusions, and the blot

145

Upon my fame vanish in idle thought,

Even as flame dies in the envious air,

And as the floweret wanes at morning frost,

And thou shouldst never——But, alas! to whom

Do I still speak?—Did not a man but now

150

Stand here before me?—No, I am alone,
 And yet I saw him. Is he gone so quickly?
 Or can the heated mind engender shapes
 From its own fear? Some terrible and strange
 Peril is near. Lisander! father! lord!
 Livia!—

155

Enter LISANDER and LIVIA.

LISANDER.

O, my daughter! What?

LIVIA.

What?

JUSTINA.

Saw you

A man go forth from my apartment now?—
 I scarce contain myself!

LISANDER.

A man here!

JUSTINA.

Have you not seen him?

LIVIA.

No, Lady.

JUSTINA.

I saw him.

LISANDER.

'Tis impossible; the doors
 Which led to this apartment were all locked.

160

LIVIA (*aside*).

I dare say it was Moscon whom she saw,
 For he was locked up in my room.

LISANDER.

It must

Have been some image of thy phantasy.
 Such melancholy as thou feedest is
 Skilful in forming such in the vain air
 Out of the motes and atoms of the day.

165

LIVIA.

My master's in the right.

JUSTINA.

O, would it were

Delusion ; but I fear some greater ill.
 I feel as if out of my bleeding bosom 170
 My heart was torn in fragments ; aye,
 Some mortal spell is wrought against my frame ;
 So potent was the charm, that had not God
 Shielded my humble innocence from wrong,
 I should have sought my sorrow and my shame, 175
 With willing steps.—Livia, quick, bring my cloak,
 For I must seek refuge from these extremes
 Even in the temple of the highest God
 Where secretly the faithful worship.

LIVIA.

Here.

JUSTINA (*putting on her cloak*).
 In this, as in a shroud of snow, may I 180
 Quench the consuming fire in which I burn,
 Wasting away!

LISANDER.

And I will go with thee.

LIVIA.

When I once see them safe out of the house
 I shall breathe freely.

JUSTINA.

So do I confide

In thy just favour, Heaven !

LISANDER.

Let us go.

185

JUSTINA.

Thine is the cause, great God ! turn for my sake,
 And for thine own, mercifully to me !

SCENES FROM THE FAUST OF GOETHE.

SCENE I.—PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN.

The Lord and the Host of Heaven. Enter three Archangels.

RAPHAEL.

THE sun makes music as of old
 Amid the rival spheres of Heaven,

On its predestined circle rolled
With thunder speed: the Angels even
Draw strength from gazing on its glance, 5
Though none its meaning fathom may:—
The world's unwithered countenance
Is bright as at creation's day.

GABRIEL.

And swift and swift, with rapid lightness,
The adorned Earth spins silently, 10
Alternating Elysian brightness
With deep and dreadful night; the sea
Foams in broad billows from the deep
Up to the rocks, and rocks and ocean,
Onward, with spheres which never sleep, 15
Are hurried in eternal motion.

MICHAEL.

And tempests in contention roar
From land to sea, from sea to land;
And, raging, weave a chain of power,
Which girds the earth, as with a band.— 20
A flashing desolation there,
Flames before the thunder's way;
But thy servants, Lord, revere
The gentle changes of thy day.

CHORUS OF THE THREE.

The Angels draw strength from thy glance, 25
Though no one comprehend thee may;—
Thy world's unwithered countenance
Is bright as on creation's day.¹

¹ RAPHAEL.

The sun sounds, according to ancient custom,
In the song of emulation of his brother-spheres.
And its fore-written circle
Fulfils with a step of thunder.
Its countenance gives the Angels strength
Though no one can fathom it.
The incredible high works
Are excellent as at the first day.

GABRIEL.

And swift, and inconceivably swift
The adornment of earth winds itself round,
And exchanges Paradise-clearness
With deep dreadful night.

Enter MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

As thou, O Lord, once more art kind enough
 To interest thyself in our affairs— 30
 And ask, "How goes it with you there below?"
 And as indulgently at other times
 Thou tookest not my visits in ill part,
 Thou seest me here once more among thy household.
 Though I should scandalize this company, 35
 You will excuse me if I do not talk
 In the high style which they think fashionable;
 My pathos certainly would make you laugh too,
 Had you not long since given over laughing.
 Nothing know I to say of suns and worlds; 40
 I observe only how men plague themselves;—
 The little god o' the world keeps the same stamp,
 As wonderful as on creation's day:—
 A little better would he live, hadst thou
 Not given him a glimpse of Heaven's light 45
 Which he calls reason, and employs it only
 To live more beastlily than any beast.
 With reverence to your Lordship be it spoken,
 He's like one of those long-legged grasshoppers,
 Who flits and jumps about, and sings for ever 50

The sea foams in broad waves
 From its deep bottom, up to the rocks,
 And rocks and sea are torn on together
 In the eternal swift course of the spheres.

MICHAEL.

And storms roar in emulation
 From sea to land, from land to sea,
 And make, raging, a chain
 Of deepest operation round about.
 There flames a flashing destruction
 Before the path of the thunderbolt.
 But thy servants, Lord, revere
 The gentle alternations of thy day.

CHORUS.

Thy countenance gives the Angels strength,
 Though none can comprehend thee:
 And all thy lofty works
 Are excellent as at the first day.

Such is a literal translation of this astonishing chorus; it is impossible to represent in another language the melody of the versification; even the volatile strength and delicacy of the ideas escape in the crucible of translation, and the reader is surprised to find a caput mortuum.

The same old song i' the grass. There let him lie,
Burying his nose in every heap of dung.

THE LORD.

Have you no more to say? Do you come here
Always to scold, and cavil, and complain?
Seems nothing ever right to you on earth?

55

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No, Lord! I find all there, as ever, bad at best.
Even I am sorry for man's days of sorrow;
I could myself almost give up the pleasure
Of plaguing the poor things.

THE LORD.

Knowest thou Faust?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The Doctor?

THE LORD.

Aye; my servant Faust.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In truth

60

He serves you in a fashion quite his own;
And the fool's meat and drink are not of earth.
His aspirations bear him on so far
That he is half aware of his own folly,
For he demands from Heaven its fairest star,
And from the earth the highest joy it bears,
Yet all things far, and all things near, are vain
To calm the deep emotions of his breast.

65

THE LORD.

Though he now serves me in a cloud of error,
I will soon lead him forth to the clear day.
When trees look green full well the gardener knows
That fruits and blooms will deck the coming year.

70

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What will you bet?—now I am sure of winning—
Only, observe you give me full permission
To lead him softly on my path.

THE LORD.

As long

75

As he shall live upon the earth, so long

Is nothing unto thee forbidden—Man
Must err till he has ceased to struggle.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thanks.

And that is all I ask; for willingly
I never make acquaintance with the dead. 80
The full fresh cheeks of youth are food for me,
And if a corpse knocks, I am not at home.
For I am like a cat—I like to play
A little with the mouse before I eat it.

THE LORD.

Well, well! it is permitted thee. Draw thou 85
His spirit from its springs; as thou find'st power,
Seize him and lead him on thy downward path;
And stand ashamed when failure teaches thee
That a good man, even in his darkest longings,
Is well aware of the right way.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well and good. 90

I am not in much doubt about my bet,
And if I lose, then 'tis your turn to crow;
Enjoy your triumph then with a full breast.
Aye; dust shall he devour, and that with pleasure,
Like my old paramour, the famous Snake. 95

THE LORD.

Pray come here when it suits you; for I never
Had much dislike for people of your sort.
And, among all the Spirits who rebelled,
The knave was ever the least tedious to me.
The active spirit of man soon sleeps, and soon 100
He seeks unbroken quiet; therefore I
Have given him the Devil for a companion,
Who may provoke him to some sort of work,
And must create for ever.—But ye, pure
Children of God, enjoy eternal beauty;— 105
Let that which ever operates and lives
Clasp you within the limits of its love;
And seize with sweet and melancholy thoughts
The floating phantoms of its loveliness.

[*Heaven closes; the Archangels exeunt.*]

MEPHISTOPHELES.

From time to time I visit the old fellow, 110
And I take care to keep on good terms with him.
Civil enough is this same God Almighty,
To talk so freely with the Devil himself.

SCENE II.—MAY-DAY NIGHT.

SCENE—*The Hartz Mountain, a desolate Country.*

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Would you not like a broomstick? As for me
I wish I had a good stout ram to ride;
For we are still far from the appointed place.

FAUST.

This knotted staff is help enough for me,
Whilst I feel fresh upon my legs. What good 5
Is there in making short a pleasant way?
To creep along the labyrinths of the vales,
And climb those rocks, where ever-babbling springs,
Precipitate themselves in waterfalls,
Is the true sport that seasons such a path. 10
Already Spring kindles the birchen spray,
And the hoar pines already feel her breath:
Shall she not work also within our limbs?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Nothing of such an influence do I feel.
My body is all wintry, and I wish 15
The flowers upon our path were frost and snow.
But see how melancholy rises now,
Dimly uplifting her belated beam,
The blank unwelcome round of the red moon,
And gives so bad a light, that every step 20
One stumbles 'gainst some crag. With your permission,
I'll call an Ignis-fatuus to our aid:
I see one yonder burning jollily.
Halloo, my friend! may I request that you
Would favour us with your bright company? 25

Why should you blaze away there to no purpose?
Pray be so good as light us up this way.

IGNIS-FATUUS.

With reverence be it spoken, I will try
To overcome the lightness of my nature;
Our course, you know, is generally zig-zag. 30

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ha, ha! your worship thinks you have to deal
With men. Go straight on, in the Devil's name,
Or I shall puff your flickering life out.

IGNIS-FATUUS.

Well,

I see you are the master of the house;
I will accommodate myself to you. 35
Only consider that to-night this mountain
Is all enchanted, and if Jack-a-lantern
Shows you his way, though you should miss your own,
You ought not to be too exact with him.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, and IGNIS-FATUUS,
in alternate Chorus.

The limits of the sphere of dream, 40
The bounds of true and false, are past.
Lead us on, thou wandering Gleam,
Lead us onward, far and fast,
To the wide, the desert waste.

But see, how swift advance and shift 45
Trees behind trees, row by row,—
How, clift by clift, rocks bend and lift
Their frowning foreheads as we go.
The giant-snouted crags, ho! ho!
How they snort, and how they blow! 50

Through the mossy sods and stones,
Stream and streamlet hurry down—
A rushing throng! A sound of song
Beneath the vault of Heaven is blown!
Sweet notes of love, the speaking tones 55
Of this bright day, sent down to say
That Paradise on Earth is known,

Resound around, beneath, above.
All we hope and all we love
Finds a voice in this blithe strain, 60
Which wakens hill and wood and rill,
And vibrates far o'er field and vale,
And which Echo, like the tale
Of old times, repeats again.

To whoo! to whoo! near, nearer now 65
The sound of song, the rushing throng!
Are the screech, the lapwing, and the jay,
All awake as if 'twere day?
See, with long legs and belly wide,
A salamander in the brake! 70
Every root is like a snake,
And along the loose hill-side,
With strange contortions through the night,
Curls, to seize or to affright;
And, animated, strong, and many, 75
They dart forth polypus-antennæ,
To blister with their poison spume
The wanderer. Through the dazzling gloom
The many-coloured mice, that thread
The dewy turf beneath our tread, 80
In troops each other's motions cross,
Through the heath and through the moss;
And, in legions intertangled,
The fire-flies flit, and swarm, and throng,
Till all the mountain depths are spangled. 85

Tell me, shall we go or stay?
Shall we onward? Come along!
Everything around is swept
Forward, onward, far away!
Trees and masses intercept 90
The sight, and wisps on every side
Are puffed up and multiplied.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Now vigorously seize my skirt, and gain
This pinnacle of isolated crag.

One may observe with wonder from this point, 95
How Mammon glows among the mountains.

FAUST.

Aye—

And strangely through the solid depth below
A melancholy light, like the red dawn,
Shoots from the lowest gorge of the abyss
Of mountains, lightning hitherward: there rise 100
Pillars of smoke, here clouds float gently by;
Here the light burns soft as the enkindled air,
Or the illumined dust of golden flowers;
And now it glides like tender colours spreading;
And now bursts forth in fountains from the earth; 105
And now it winds, one torrent of broad light,
Through the far valley with a hundred veins;
And now once more within that narrow corner
Masses itself into intensest splendour.
And near us, see, sparks spring out of the ground, 110
Like golden sand scattered upon the darkness;
The pinnacles of that black wall of mountains
That hems us in are kindled.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Rare, in faith!

Does not Sir Mammon gloriously illuminate
His palace for this festival—it is 115
A pleasure which you had not known before.
I spy the boisterous guests already.

FAUST.

How

The children of the wind rage in the air!
With what fierce strokes they fall upon my neck!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Cling tightly to the old ribs of the crag. 120
Beware! for if with them thou warrest
In their fierce flight towards the wilderness,
Their breath will sweep thee into dust, and drag
Thy body to a grave in the abyss.

A cloud thickens the night. 125

Hark! how the tempest crashes through the forest!
The owls fly out in strange affright;

The columns of the evergreen palaces
Are split and shattered;
The roots creak, and stretch, and groan; 130
And ruinously overthrown,
The trunks are crushed and shattered
By the fierce blast's unconquerable stress.
Over each other crack and crash they all
In terrible and intertangled fall; 135
And through the ruins of the shaken mountain
The airs hiss and howl—
It is not the voice of the fountain,
Nor the wolf in his midnight prowl.
Dost thou not hear? 140
Strange accents are ringing
Aloft, afar, anear;
The witches are singing!
The torrent of a raging wizard song
Streams the whole mountain along. 145

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

The stubble is yellow, the corn is green,
Now to the Brocken the witches go;
The mighty multitude here may be seen
Gathering, wizard and witch, below.
Sir Urian is sitting aloft in the air; 150
Hey over stock! and hey over stone!
'Twixt witches and incubi, what shall be done?
Tell it who dare! tell it who dare!

A VOICE.

Upon a sow-swine, whose farrows were nine,
Old Baubo rideth alone. 155

CHORUS.

Honour her, to whom honour is due,
Old mother Baubo, honour to you!
An able sow, with old Baubo upon her,
Is worthy of glory, and worthy of honour!
The legion of witches is coming behind, 160
Darkening the night, and outspeeding the wind—

A VOICE.

Which way comest thou!

A VOICE.

Over Ilsenstein;
 The owl was awake in the white moon-shine;
 I saw her at rest in her downy nest,
 And she stared at me with her broad, bright eyne. 165

VOICES.

And you may now as well take your course on to Hell,
 Since you ride by so fast on the headlong blast.

A VOICE.

She dropt poison upon me as I past.
 Here are the wounds——

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

Come away! come along!
 The way is wide, the way is long, 170
 But what is that for a Bedlam throng?
 Stick with the prong, and scratch with the broom.
 The child in the cradle lies strangled at home,
 And the mother is clapping her hands.—

SEMICHORUS OF WIZARDS I.

We glide in
 Like snails when the women are all away; 175
 And from a house once given over to sin
 Woman has a thousand steps to stray.

SEMICHORUS II.

A thousand steps must a woman take,
 Where a man but a single spring will make.

VOICES ABOVE.

Come with us, come with us, from Felsensee. 180

VOICES BELOW.

With what joy would we fly through the upper sky!
 We are washed, we are 'nointed, stark naked are we;
 But our toil and our pain are for ever in vain.

BOTH CHORUSES.

The wind is still, the stars are fled,
 The melancholy moon is dead; 185
 The magic notes, like spark on spark,
 Drizzle, whistling through the dark.

Come away! —

VOICES BELOW.

Stay, oh, stay!

VOICES ABOVE.

Out of the crannies of the rocks, 190
Who calls?

VOICES BELOW.

Oh, let me join your flocks!
I, three hundred years have striven
To catch your skirt and mount to Heaven,—
And still in vain. Oh, might I be
With company akin to me! 195

BOTH CHORUSES.

Some on a ram and some on a prong,
On poles and on broomsticks we flutter along;
Forlorn is the wight who can rise not to-night.

A HALF-WITCH BELOW.

I have been tripping this many an hour:
Are the others already so far before? 200
No quiet at home, and no peace abroad!
And less methinks is found by the road.

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

Come onward, away! aroint thee, aroint!
A witch to be strong must anoint—anoint—
Then every trough will be boat enough; 205
With a rag for a sail we can sweep through the sky,
Who flies not to-night, when means he to fly?

BOTH CHORUSES.

We cling to the skirt, and we strike on the ground;
Witch-legions thicken around and around;
Wizard-swarms cover the heath all over. [*They descend.* 210

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What thronging, dashing, raging, rustling;
What whispering, babbling, hissing, bustling;
What glimmering, spurting, stinking, burning,
As Heaven and Earth were overturning.
There is a true witch element about us; 215
Take hold on me, or we shall be divided:—
Where are you?

FAUST (*from a distance*).

Here!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What!

I must exert my authority in the house.
Place for young Volland! pray make way, good people.
Take hold on me, doctor, and with one step 220
Let us escape from this unpleasant crowd:
They are too mad for people of my sort.
Just there shines a peculiar kind of light—
Something attracts me in those bushes. Come
This way: we shall slip down there in a minute. 225

FAUST.

Spirit of Contradiction! Well, lead on—
'Twere a wise feat indeed to wander out
Into the Brocken upon May-day night,
And then to isolate oneself in scorn,
Disgusted with the humours of the time. 230

MEPHISTOPHELES.

See yonder, round a many-coloured flame
A merry club is huddled altogether:
Even with such little people as sit there
One would not be alone.

FAUST.

Would that I were
Up yonder in the glow and whirling smoke, 235
Where the blind million rush impetuously
To meet the evil ones; there might I solve
Many a riddle that torments me!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yet

Many a riddle there is tied anew
Inextricably. Let the great world rage! 240
We will stay here safe in the quiet dwellings.
'Tis an old custom. Men have ever built
Their own small world in the great world of all.
I see young witches naked there, and old ones
Wisely attired with greater decency. 245
Be guided now by me, and you shall buy

A pound of pleasure with a dram of trouble.
I hear them tune their instruments—one must
Get used to this damned scraping. Come, I'll lead you
Among them; and what there you do and see, 250
As a fresh compact 'twixt us two shall be.
How say you now? this space is wide enough—
Look forth, you cannot see the end of it—
An hundred bonfires burn in rows, and they
Who throng around them seem innumerable: 255
Dancing and drinking, jabbering, making love,
And cooking, are at work. Now tell me, friend,
What is there better in the world than this?

FAUST.

In introducing us, do you assume
The character of wizard or of devil? 260

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In truth, I generally go about
In strict incognito; and yet one likes
To wear one's orders upon gala days.
I have no ribbon at my knee; but here
At home, the cloven foot is honourable. 265
See you that snail there?—she comes creeping up,
And with her feeling eyes hath smelt out something.
I could not, if I would, mask myself here.
Come now, we'll go about from fire to fire:
I'll be the pimp, and you shall be the lover. 270

To some Old Women, who are sitting round a heap of glimmering coals.

Old gentlewomen, what do you do out here?
You ought to be with the young rioters
Right in the thickest of the revelry—
But every one is best content at home.

GENERAL.

Who dare confide in right or a just claim? 275
So much as I had done for them! and now—
With women and the people 'tis the same,
Youth will stand foremost ever,—age may go
To the dark grave unhonoured.

MINISTER.

Now-a-days
 People assert their rights: they go too far; 280
 But as for me, the good old times I praise;
 Then we were all in all, 'twas something worth
 One's while to be in place and wear a star;
 That was indeed the golden age on earth.

PARVENU.

We too are active, and we did and do 285
 What we ought not, perhaps; and yet we now
 Will seize, whilst all things are whirled round and round,
 A spoke of Fortune's wheel, and keep our ground.

AUTHOR.

Who now can taste a treatise of deep sense
 And ponderous volume? 'tis impertinence 290
 To write what none will read, therefore will I
 To please the young and thoughtless people try.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

(Who all at once appears to have grown very old).
 I find the people ripe for the last day,
 Since I last came up to the wizard mountain;
 And as my little cask runs turbid now, 295
 So is the world drained to the dregs.

PEDLAR-WITCH.

Look here,
 Gentlemen; do not hurry on so fast
 And lose the chance of a good pennyworth.
 I have a pack full of the choicest wares
 Of every sort, and yet in all my bundle 300
 Is nothing like what may be found on earth;
 Nothing that in a moment will make rich
 Men and the world with fine malicious mischief—
 There is no dagger drunk with blood; no bowl
 From which consuming poison may be drained 305
 By innocent and healthy lips; no jewel,
 The price of an abandoned maiden's shame;
 No sword which cuts the bond it cannot loose,
 Or stabs the wearer's enemy in the back;
 No——

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Gossip, you know little of these times. 310
 What has been, has been; what is done, is past.
 They shape themselves into the innovations
 They breed, and innovation drags us with it.
 The torrent of the crowd sweeps over us:
 You think to impel, and are yourself impelled. 315

FAUST.

Who is that yonder?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Mark her well. It is

Lilith.

FAUST.

Who?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Lilith, the first wife of Adam.
 Beware of her fair hair, for she excels
 All women in the magic of her locks;
 And when she winds them round a young man's neck,
 She will not ever set him free again. 321

FAUST.

There sit a girl and an old woman—they
 Seem to be tired with pleasure and with play.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

There is no rest to-night for any one:
 When one dance ends another is begun; 325
 Come, let us to it. We shall have rare fun.

[*Faust dances and sings with a girl, and Mephistopheles with an old Woman.*]

FAUST.

I had once a lovely dream
 In which I saw an apple tree,
 Where two fair apples with their gleam
 To climb and taste attracted me. 330

THE GIRL.

She with apples you desired
 From Paradise came long ago:
 With you I feel that if required,
 Such still within my garden grow.

* * * * *

PROCTO-PHANTASMIST.

What is this cursèd multitude about? 835
 Have we not long since proved to demonstration
 That ghosts move not on ordinary feet?
 But these are dancing just like men and women.

THE GIRL.

What does he want then at our ball?

FAUST.

Oh! he

Is far above us all in his conceit: 840
 Whilst we enjoy, he reasons of enjoyment;
 And any step which in our dance we tread,
 If it be left out of his reckoning,
 Is not to be considered as a step.
 There are few things that scandalize him not: 845
 And when you whirl round in the circle now,
 As he went round the wheel in his old 'mill,
 He says that you go wrong in all respects,
 Especially if you congratulate him
 Upon the strength of the resemblance.

PROCTO-PHANTASMIST.

Fly!

Vanish! Unheard of impudence! What, still there! 850
 In this enlightened age too, since you have been
 Proved not to exist!—But this infernal brood
 Will hear no reason and endure no rule.
 Are we so wise, and is the *pond* still haunted? 855
 How long have I been sweeping out this rubbish
 Of superstition, and the world will not
 Come clean with all my pains!—it is a case
 Unheard of!

THE GIRL.

Then leave off teasing us so.

PROCTO-PHANTASMIST.

I tell you, spirits, to your faces now, 860
 That I should not regret this despotism
 Of spirits, but that mine can wield it not.
 To-night I shall make poor work of it,
 Yet I will take a round with you, and hope
 Before my last step in the living dance 865

To beat the poet and the devil together.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

At last he will sit down in some foul puddle;
That is his way of solacing himself;
Until some leech, diverted with his gravity,
Cures him of spirits and the spirit together.

370

[*To FAUST, who has seceded from the dance.*

Why do you let that fair girl pass from you,
Who sung so sweetly to you in the dance?

FAUST.

A red mouse in the middle of her singing
Sprung from her mouth.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That was all right, my friend :

Be it enough that the mouse was not grey.

375

Do not disturb your hour of happiness
With close consideration of such trifles.

FAUST.

Then saw I ——

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What?

FAUST.

Seest thou not a pale,

Fair girl, standing alone, far, far away?

She drags herself now forward with slow steps,

380

And seems as if she moved with shackled feet:

I cannot overcome the thought that she

Is like poor Margaret.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Let it be—pass on—

No good can come of it—it is not well

To meet it—it is an enchanted phantom,

385

A lifeless idol; with its numbing look,

It freezes up the blood of man; and they

Who meet its ghastly stare are turned to stone,

Like those who saw Medusa.

FAUST.

Oh, too true!

Her eyes are like the eyes of a fresh corpse

390

Which no belovèd hand has closed, alas!
That is the breast which Margaret yielded to me—
Those are the lovely limbs which I enjoyed!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

It is all magic, poor deluded fool!
She looks to every one like his first love.

395

FAUST.

Oh, what delight! what woe! I cannot turn
My looks from her sweet piteous countenance.
How strangely does a single blood-red line,
Not broader than the sharp edge of a knife,
Adorn her lovely neck!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Aye, she can carry
Her head under her arm upon occasion;
Perseus has cut it off for her. These pleasures
End in delusion.—Gain this rising ground,
It is as airy here as in a []
And if I am not mightily deceived,
I see a theatre.—What may this mean?

400

405

ATTENDANT.

Quite a new piece, the last of seven, for 'tis
The custom now to represent that number.
'Tis written by a Dilettante, and
The actors who perform are Dilettanti;
Excuse me, gentlemen; but I must vanish.
I am a Dilettante curtain-lifter.

410

JUVENILIA.

VERSES ON A CAT.

I.

A CAT in distress,
Nothing more, nor less;
Good folks, I must faithfully tell ye,
As I am a sinner,
It waits for some dinner
To stuff out its own little belly.

II.

You would not easily guess
All the modes of distress
Which torture the tenants of earth;
And the various evils,
Which like so many devils,
Attend the poor souls from their birth.

III.

Some a living require,
And others desire
An old fellow out of the way;
And which is the best
I leave to be guessed,
For I cannot pretend to say.

IV.

One wants society,
Another variety,
Others a tranquil life;
Some want food,
Others, as good,
Only want a wife.

V.

But this poor little cat
Only wanted a rat,
To stuff out its own little maw;
And it were as good
Some people had such food,
To make them *hold their jaw!*

FRAGMENT.

HARK! the owlet flaps his wings
 In the pathless dell beneath;
 Hark! 'tis the night-raven sings
 Tidings of approaching death.

EPITAPHIUM.

[LATIN VERSION OF THE EPITAPH IN GRAY'S ELEGY.]

I.

Hic sinu fessum caput hospitali
 Cespitis dormit juvenis, nec illi
 Fata ridebant, popularis ille
 Nescius auræ.

II.

Musa non vultu genus arroganti
 Rusticâ natum grege despicata,
 Et suum tristis puerum notavit
 Sollicitudo.

III.

Indoles illi bene larga, pectus
 Veritas sedem sibi vindicavit,
 Et pari tantis meritis beavit
 Munere cœlum.

IV.

Omne quod mœstis habuit miserto
 Corde largivit lacrymam, recepit
 Omne quod cœlo voluit, fidelis
 Pectus amici.

V.

Longius sed tu fuge curiosus
 Cæteras laudes fuge suspicari,
 Cæteras culpas fuge velle tractas
 Sede tremendâ.

VI.

Spe tremescentes recubant in illâ
 Sede virtutes pariterque culpæ,
 In sui Patris gremio, tremendâ
 Sede Deique.

IN HOROLOGIUM

INTER marmoreas Leonoræ pendula colles
 Fortunata nimis Machina dicit horas.
 Quas *manibus* premit illa duas insensa papillas
 Cur mihi sit *digito* tangere, amata, nefas.

SONG FROM THE WANDERING JEW.

SEE yon opening flower
 Spreads its fragrance to the blast;
 It fades within an hour,
 Its decay is pale—is fast.
 Paler is yon maiden;
 Faster is her heart's decay;
 Deep with sorrow laden,
 She sinks in death away.

PASSAGE FROM THE WANDERING JEW.

THE Elements respect their Maker's seal!
 Still like the scathèd pine tree's height,
 Braving the tempests of the night
 Have I 'scap'd the bickering flame.
 Like the scath'd pine, which a monument stands
 Of faded grandeur, which the brands
 Of the tempest-shaken air
 Have riven on the desolate heath;
 Yet it stands majestic even in death,
 And rears its wild form there.

THE SOLITARY.

I.

DAR'ST thou amid the varied multitude
 To live alone, an isolated thing?
 To see the busy beings round thee spring,
 And care for none; in thy calm solitude,
 A flower that scarce breathes in the desert rude
 To Zephyr's passing wing?

II.

Not the swart Pariah in some Indian grove,
 Lone, lean, and hunted by his brother's hate,
 Hath drunk so deep the cup of bitter fate
 As that poor wretch who cannot, cannot love:
 He bears a load which nothing can remove,
 A killing withering weight.

III.

He smiles—'tis sorrow's deadliest mockery;
 He speaks—the cold words flow not from his soul;
 He acts like others, drains the genial bowl,—
 Yet, yet he longs—although he fears—to die;
 He pants to reach what yet he seems to fly,
 Dull life's extremest goal.

DEATH: A DIALOGUE.

DEATH.

FOR my dagger is bathed in the blood of the brave,
 I come, care-worn tenant of life, from the grave,
 Where Innocence sleeps 'neath the peace-giving sod,
 And the good cease to tremble at Tyranny's nod;
 I offer a calm habitation to thee,
 Say, victim of grief, wilt thou slumber with me? 5
 My mansion is damp, cold silence is there,
 But it lulls in oblivion the fiends of despair,
 Not a groan of regret, not a sigh, not a breath,
 Dares dispute with grim silence the empire of Death. 10
 I offer a calm habitation to thee,
 Say, victim of grief, wilt thou slumber with me?

MORTAL.

Mine eyelids are heavy; my soul seeks repose,
 It longs in thy cells to embosom its woes,
 It longs in thy cells to deposit its load, 15
 Where no longer the scorpions of Perfidy goad;
 Where the phantoms of Prejudice vanish away,
 And Bigotry's bloodhounds lose scent of their prey;
 Yet tell me, dark Death, when thine empire is o'er,
 What awaits on Futurity's mist-covered shore? 20

DEATH.

Cease, cease, wayward Mortal! I dare not unveil
 The shadows that float on Eternity's vale;
 Nought waits for the good, but a spirit of Love,
 That will hail their blest advent to regions above.
 For Love, Mortal, gleams thro' the gloom of my sway, 25
 And the shades which surround me fly fast at its ray.
 Hast thou loved?—Then depart from these regions of hate,
 And in slumber with me blunt the arrows of fate.
 I offer a calm habitation to thee,
 Say, victim of grief, wilt thou slumber with me? 30

MORTAL.

Oh! sweet is thy slumber! oh! sweet is the ray
 Which after thy night introduces the day;
 How concealed, how persuasive, self-interest's breath,
 Tho' it floats to mine ear from the bosom of Death.
 I hoped that I quite was forgotten by all, 35
 Yet a lingering friend might be grieved at my fall,
 And duty forbids, tho' I languish to die,
 When departure might heave virtue's breast with a sigh.
 Oh, Death! oh, my friend! snatch this form to thy shrine,
 And I fear, dear destroyer, I shall not repine. 40

DEATH VANQUISHED.

DEATH! where is thy victory?
 To triumph whilst I die,
 To triumph whilst thine ebon wing
 Infolds my shuddering soul.
 Oh, Death! where is thy sting? 5
 Not when the tides of murder roll,
 When nations groan, that kings may bask in bliss.
 Death! canst thou boast a victory such as this?
 When in his hour of pomp and power
 His blow the mightiest murders gave, 10
 'Mid nature's cries the sacrifice
 Of millions to glut the grave;
 When sunk the tyrant desolation's slave;
 Or Freedom's life-blood streamed upon thy shrine; 14
 Stern tyrant, couldst thou boast a victory such as mine?

To know in dissolution's void,
 That mortals baubles sunk decay,
 That everything, but Love, destroyed
 Must perish with its kindred clay.
 Perish Ambition's crown, 20
 Perish her sceptered sway;
 From Death's pale front fades Pride's fastidious frown.
 In Death's damp vault the lurid fires decay,
 That Envy lights at heaven-born Virtue's beam—
 That all the cares subside, 25
 Which lurk beneath the tide
 Of life's unquiet stream.
 Yes! this is victory!
 And on yon rock, whose dark form glooms the sky,
 To stretch these pale limbs, when the soul is fled; 30
 To baffle the lean passions of their prey,
 To sleep within the palace of the dead!
 Oh! not the King, around whose dazzling throne
 His countless courtiers mock the words they say,
 Triumphs amid the bud of glory blown, 35
 As I in this cold bed, and faint expiring groan!
 Tremble, ye proud, whose grandeur mocks the woe,
 Which props the column of unnatural state,
 You the plainings faint and low,
 From misery's tortured soul that flow, 40
 Shall usher to your fate.
 Tremble, ye conquerors; at whose fell command
 The war-fiend riots o'er a peaceful land.
 You desolation's gory throng
 Shall bear from Victory along 45
 To that mysterious strand.

POEMS FROM ST. IRVYNE, OR THE ROSICRUCIAN.

NUMBER 1.

I.

'TWAS dead of the night, when I sat in my dwelling;
 One glimmering lamp was expiring and low;

Around, the dark tide of the tempest was swelling,
 Along the wild mountains night-ravens were yelling,—
 They bodingly presag'd destruction and woe.

II.

'Twas then that I started!—the wild storm was howling,
 Nought was seen, save the lightning, which danc'd in
 the sky;

Above me, the crash of the thunder was rolling,
 And low, chilling murmurs, the blast wafted by.

III.

My heart sank within me—unheeded the war
 Of the battling clouds, on the mountain-tops, broke;—
 Unheeded the thunder-peal crash'd in mine ear—
 This heart, hard as iron, is stranger to fear;
 But conscience in low, noiseless whispering spoke.

IV.

'Twas then that her form on the whirlwind upholding,
 The ghost of the murder'd Victoria strode;
 In her right hand, a shadowy shroud she was holding,
 She swiftly advanc'd to my lonesome abode.

V.

I wildly then call'd on the tempest to bear me—
 * * * * *

NUMBER 2.

I.

GHOSTS of the dead! have I not heard your yelling
 Rise on the night-rolling breath of the blast,
 When o'er the dark ether the tempest is swelling,
 And on eddying whirlwind the thunder-peal past?

II.

For oft have I stood on the dark height of Jura,
 Which frowns on the valley that opens beneath;
 Oft have I brav'd the chill night-tempest's fury,
 Whilst around me, I thought, echo'd murmurs of death.

III.

And now, whilst the winds of the mountain are howling,
 O father! thy voice seems to strike on mine ear;
 In air whilst the tide of the night-storm is rolling,
 It breaks on the pause of the elements' jar.

IV.

On the wing of the whirlwind which roars o'er the mountain
Perhaps rides the ghost of my sire who is dead;
On the mist of the tempest which hangs o'er the fountain,
Whilst a wreath of dark vapour encircles his head.

NUMBER 3.—BALLAD.

I.

THE death-bell beats!—
The mountain repeats
The echoing sound of the knell;
And the dark monk now
Wraps the cowl round his brow,
As he sits in his lonely cell.

II.

And the cold hand of death
Chills his shuddering breath,
As he lists to the fearful lay
Which the ghosts of the sky,
As they sweep wildly by,
Sing to departed day.
And they sing of the hour
When the stern fates had power
To resolve Rosa's form to its clay.

III.

But that hour is past;
And that hour was the last
Of peace to the dark monk's brain.
Bitter tears, from his eyes, gush'd silent and fast;
And he strove to suppress them in vain.

IV.

Then his fair cross of gold he dash'd on the floor,
When the death-knell struck on his ear.
Delight is in store
For her evermore;
But for me is fate, horror, and fear.

V.

Then his eyes wildly roll'd,
When the death-bell toll'd,

And he rag'd in terrific woe.
 And he stamp'd on the ground,—
 But when ceas'd the sound,
 Tears again began to flow.

VI.

And the ice of despair
 Chill'd the wild throb of care,
 And he sate in mute agony still;
 Till the night-stars shone through the cloudless air,
 And the pale moon-beam slept on the hill.

VII.

Then he knelt in his cell:—
 And the horrors of hell
 Were delights to his agoniz'd pain,
 And he pray'd to God to dissolve the spell,
 Which else must for ever remain.

VIII.

And in fervent pray'r he knelt on the ground,
 Till the abbey bell struck One:
 His feverish blood ran chill at the sound:
 A voice hollow and horrible murmur'd around—
 "The term of thy penance is done!"

IX.

Grew dark the night;
 The moon-beam bright
 Wax'd faint on the mountain high;
 And, from the black hill,
 Went a voice cold and still,—
 "Monk! thou art free to die."

X.

Then he rose on his feet,
 And his heart loud did beat,
 And his limbs they were palsied with dread;
 Whilst the grave's clammy dew
 O'er his pale forehead grew;
 And he shudder'd to sleep with the dead.

XI.

And the wild midnight storm
 Rav'd around his tall form,
 As he sought the chapel's gloom:

And the sunk grass did sigh
To the wind, bleak and high,
As he search'd for the new-made tomb.

XII.

And forms, dark and high,
Seem'd around him to fly,
And mingle their yells with the blast:
And on the dark wall
Half-seen shadows did fall,
As enhorror'd he onward pass'd.

XIII.

And the storm-fiend's wild rave
O'er the new-made grave,
And dread shadows, linger around.
The Monk call'd on God his soul to save,
And, in horror, sank on the ground.

XIV.

Then despair nerv'd his arm
To dispel the charm,
And he burst Rosa's coffin asunder.
And the fierce storm did swell
More terrific and fell,
And louder peal'd the thunder.

XV.

And laugh'd, in joy, the fiendish throng,
Mix'd with ghosts of the mouldering dead:
And their grisly wings, as they floated along,
Whistled in murmurs dread.

XVI.

And her skeleton form the dead Nun rear'd,
Which dripp'd with the chill dew of hell.
In her half-eaten eyeballs two pale flames appear'd,
And triumphant their gleam on the dark Monk glar'd,
As he stood within the cell.

XVII.

And her lank hand lay on his shuddering brain;
But each power was nerv'd by fear.—
"I never, henceforth, may breathe again;
Death now ends mine anguish'd pain.—
The grave yawns,—we meet there."

XVIII.

And her skeleton lungs did utter the sound,
 So deadly, so lone, and so fell,
 That in long vibrations shudder'd the ground;
 And as the stern notes floated around,
 A deep groan was answer'd from hell.

NUMBER 4.—SONG.

I.

How swiftly through heaven's wide expanse
 Bright day's resplendent colours fade!
 How sweetly does the moonbeam's glance
 With silver tint St. Irvyne's glade!

II.

No cloud along the spangled air,
 Is borne upon the evening breeze;
 How solemn is the scene! how fair
 The moonbeams rest upon the trees!

III.

Yon dark gray turret glimmers white,
 Upon it sits the mournful owl;
 Along the stillness of the night,
 Her melancholy shriekings roll.

IV.

But not alone on Irvyne's tower,
 The silver moonbeam pours her ray;
 It gleams upon the ivied bower,
 It dances in the cascade's spray.

V.

"Ah! why do dark'ning shades conceal
 The hour, when man must cease to be?
 Why may not human minds unveil
 The dim mists of futurity?"

VI.

"The keenness of the world hath torn
 The heart which opens to its blast;
 Despis'd, neglected, and forlorn,
 Sinks the wretch in death at last."

NUMBER 5.—SONG.

I.

How stern are the woes of the desolate mourner,
As he bends in still grief o'er the hallowed bier,
As enanguish'd he turns from the laugh of the scorner,
And drops, to perfection's remembrance, a tear;
When floods of despair down his pale cheek are streaming,
When no blissful hope on his bosom is beaming,
Or, if lull'd for a while, soon he starts from his dreaming,
And finds torn the soft ties to affection so dear.

II.

Ah! when shall day dawn on the night of the grave,
Or summer succeed to the winter of death?
Rest awhile, hapless victim, and Heaven will save
The spirit, that faded away with the breath.
Eternity points in its amaranth bower,
Where no clouds of fate o'er the sweet prospect lower,
Unspeakable pleasure, of goodness the dower,
When woe fades away like the mist of the heath.

NUMBER 6.—SONG.

I.

AH! faint are her limbs, and her footstep is weary,
Yet far must the desolate wanderer roam;
Though the tempest is stern, and the mountain is dreary,
She must quit at deep midnight her pitiless home.
I see her swift foot dash the dew from the whortle,
As she rapidly hastes to the green grove of myrtle;
And I hear, as she wraps round her figure the kirtle,
"Stay thy boat on the lake,—dearest Henry, I come."

II.

High swell'd in her bosom the throb of affection,
As lightly her form bounded over the lea,
And arose in her mind every dear recollection;
"I come, dearest Henry, and wait but for thee."
How sad, when dear hope every sorrow is soothing,
When sympathy's swell the soft bosom is moving,

And the mind the mild joys of affection is proving,
Is the stern voice of fate that bids happiness flee!

III.

Oh! dark lower'd the clouds on that horrible eve,
And the moon dimly gleam'd through the tempest air;
Oh! how could fond visions such softness deceive?

Oh! how could false hope rend a bosom so fair?
Thy love's pallid corse the wild surges are laving,
O'er his form the fierce swell of the tempest is raving;
But, fear not, parting spirit; thy goodness is saving,
In eternity's bowers, a seat for thee there.

POSTHUMOUS FRAGMENTS

OF

MARGARET NICHOLSON;

BEING POEMS FOUND AMONGST THE PAPERS OF THAT
NOTED FEMALE WHO ATTEMPTED THE LIFE
OF THE KING IN 1786.

EDITED BY

JOHN FITZVICTOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE energy and native genius of these Fragments, must be the only apology which the Editor can make for thus intruding them on the Public Notice. The FIRST I found with no title, and have left it so. It is intimately connected with the dearest interests of universal happiness; and much as we may deplore the fatal and enthusiastic tendency which the ideas of this poor female had acquired, we cannot fail to pay the tribute of unequivocal regret to the departed memory

of genius, which, had it been rightly organized, would have made that intellect, which has since become the victim of phrenzy and despair, a most brilliant ornament to society.

In case the sale of these Fragments evinces that the Public have any curiosity to be presented with a more copious collection of my unfortunate Aunt's Poems, I have other papers in my possession, which shall, in that case, be subjected to their notice. It may be supposed they require much arrangement; but I send the following to the press in the same state in which they came into my possession.

J. F.

POSTHUMOUS FRAGMENTS.

AMBITION, power, and avarice, now have hurl'd
 Death, fate, and ruin, on a bleeding world.
 See! on yon heath what countless victims lie,
 Hark! what loud shrieks ascend thro' yonder sky;
 Tell then the cause, 'tis sure the avenger's rage 5
 Has swept these myriads from life's crowded stage:
 Hark to that groan, an anguish'd hero dies,
 He shudders in death's latest agonies;
 Yet does a fleeting hectic flush his cheek,
 Yet does his parting breath essay to speak— 10
 " Oh God! my wife, my children—Monarch thou
 " For whose support this fainting frame lies low;
 " For whose support in distant lands I bleed,
 " Let his friends' welfare be the warrior's meed.
 " He hears me not—ah! no—kings cannot hear, 15
 " For passion's voice has dull'd their listless ear.
 " To thee, then, mighty God, I lift my moan,
 " Thou wilt not scorn a suppliant's anguish'd groan.
 " Oh! now I die—but still is death's fierce pain—
 " God hears my prayer—we meet, we meet again." 20
 He spake, reclin'd him on death's bloody bed,
 And with a parting groan his spirit fled.
 Oppressors of mankind to *you* we owe
 The baleful streams from whence these miseries flow;

For you how many a mother weeps her son, 25
 Snatch'd from life's course ere half his race was run!
 For you how many a widow drops a tear,
 In silent anguish, on her husband's bier!
 "Is it then thine, Almighty Power," she cries,
 "Whence tears of endless sorrow dim these eyes? 30
 "Is this the system which thy powerful sway,
 "Which else in shapeless chaos sleeping lay,
 "Form'd and approv'd?—it cannot be—but oh!
 "Forgive me Heaven, my brain is warp'd by woe."
 'Tis not—he never bade the war-note swell, 35
 He never triumph'd in the work of hell—
 Monarchs of earth! thine is the baleful deed,
 Thine are the crimes for which thy subjects bleed.
 Ah! when will come the sacred fated time,
 When man unsullied by his leaders' crime, 40
 Despising wealth, ambition, pomp, and pride,
 Will stretch him fearless by his foemen's side?
 Ah! when will come the time, when o'er the plain
 No more shall death and desolation reign?
 When will the sun smile on the bloodless field, 45
 And the stern warrior's arm the sickle wield?
 Not whilst some King, in cold ambition's dreams,
 Plans for the field of death his plodding schemes;
 Not whilst for private pique the public fall,
 And one frail mortal's mandate governs all. 50
 Swell'd with command and mad with dizzying sway;
 Who sees unmov'd his myriads fade away.
 Careless who lives or dies—so that he gains
 Some trivial point for which he took the pains.
 What then are Kings?—I see the trembling crowd, 55
 I hear their fulsome clamours echoed loud;
 Their stern oppressor pleas'd appears awhile,
 But April's sunshine is a Monarch's smile—
 Kings are but dust—the last eventful day
 Will level all and make them lose their sway; 60
 Will dash the sceptre from the Monarch's hand,
 And from the warrior's grasp wrest the ensanguin'd brand.
 Oh! Peace, soft peace, art thou for ever gone,
 Is this fair form indeed for ever flown?

And love and concord hast thou swept away, 65
 As if incongruous with thy parted sway?
 Alas I fear thou hast, for none appear.
 Now o'er the palsied earth stalks giant Fear,
 With War, and Woe, and Terror, in his train;
 List'ning he pauses on the embattled plain, 70
 Then speeding swiftly o'er the ensanguin'd heath,
 Has left the frightful work to hell and death.
 See! gory Ruin yokes his blood-stain'd car,
 He scents the battle's carnage from afar;
 Hell and destruction mark his mad career, 75
 He tracks the rapid step of hurrying Fear;
 Whilst ruin'd towns and smoaking cities tell,
 That thy work, Monarch, is the work of hell.
 It is thy work! I hear a voice repeat,
 Shakes the broad basis of thy blood-stained seat; 80
 And at the orphan's sigh, the widow's moan,
 Totters the fabric of thy guilt-stained throne—
 "It is thy work, O Monarch;" now the sound
 Fainter and fainter, yet is borne around,
 Yet to enthusiast ears the murmurs tell 85
 That heaven, indignant at the work of hell,
 Will soon the cause, the hated cause remove,
 Which tears from earth peace, innocence, and love.

FRAGMENT.

SUPPOSED TO BE AN EPITHALAMIUM OF FRANCIS RAVAILLAC
 AND CHARLOTTE CORDÉ.

'Tis midnight now—athwart the murky air,
 Dank lurid meteors shoot a livid gleam;
 From the dark storm-clouds flashes a fearful glare,
 It shews the bending oak, the roaring stream.
 I ponder'd on the woes of lost mankind, 5
 I ponder'd on the ceaseless rage of Kings;
 My rapt soul dwelt upon the ties that bind
 The mazy volume of commingling things,
 When fell and wild misrule to man stern sorrow brings.

I heard a yell—it was not the knell, 10
 When the blasts on the wild lake sleep,
 That floats on the pause of the summer gale's swell,
 O'er the breast of the waveless deep.

I thought it had been death's accents cold
 That bade me recline on the shore; 15
 I laid mine hot head on the surge-beaten mould,
 And thought to breathe no more.

But a heavenly sleep
 That did suddenly steep
 In balm my bosom's pain, 20
 Pervaded my soul,
 And free from control,
 Did mine intellect range again.

Methought enthron'd upon a silvery cloud,
 Which floated 'mid a strange and brilliant light; 25
 My form upborne by viewless æther rode,
 And spurn'd the lessening realms of earthly night.
 What heavenly notes burst on my ravish'd ears,
 What beauteous spirits met my dazzled eye!
 Hark! louder swells the music of the spheres, 30
 More clear the forms of speechless bliss float by,
 And heavenly gestures suit æthereal melody.

But fairer than the spirits of the air,
 More graceful than the Sylph of symmetry,
 Than the enthusiast's fancied love more fair, 35
 Were the bright forms that swept the azure sky.
 Enthron'd in roseate light, a heavenly band
 Strew'd flowers of bliss that never fade away;
 They welcome virtue to its native land,
 And songs of triumph greet the joyous day 40
 When endless bliss the woes of fleeting life repay.

Congenial minds will seek their kindred soul,
 E'en though the tide of time has roll'd between;
 They mock weak matter's impotent control,
 And seek of endless life the eternal scene. 45
 At death's vain summons *this* will never die,
 In nature's chaos *this* will not decay—

These are the bands which closely, warmly, tie
 Thy soul, O Charlotte, 'yond this chain of clay,
 To him who thine must be till time shall fade away. 50

Yes Francis! thine was the dear knife that tore
 A tyrant's heart-strings from his guilty breast,
 Thine was the daring at a tyrant's gore,

To smile in triumph, to condemn the rest;
 And thine, lov'd glory of thy sex! to tear 55

From its base shrine a despot's haughty soul,
 To laugh at sorrow in secure despair,

To mock, with smiles, life's lingering control,
 And triumph 'mid the griefs that round thy fate did roll.

Yes! the fierce spirits of the avenging deep 60
 With endless tortures goad their guilty shades.

I see the lank and ghastly spectres sweep
 Along the burning length of yon arcades;

And I see Satan stalk athwart the plain;
 He hastes along the burning soil of hell. 65

"Welcome thou despots to my dark domain,

"With maddening joy mine anguish'd senses swell
 "To welcome to their home the friends I love so well."

* * * * *
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Hark! to those notes, how sweet, how thrilling sweet
 They echo to the sound of angels feet. 70

* * * * *

Oh haste to the bower where roses are spread,
 For there is prepared thy nuptial bed.

Oh haste—hark! hark!—they're gone.
 * * * * *

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

STAY ye days of contentment and joy,
 Whilst love every care is erasing, 75

Stay ye pleasures that never can cloy,
 And ye spirits that can never cease pleasing.

And if any soft passion be near,
 Which mortals, frail mortals, can know,

Let love shed on the bosom a tear, 80
 And dissolve the chill ice-drop of woe.

SYMPHONY.

FRANCIS.

"SOFT, my dearest angel stay,
 "Oh! you suck my soul away;
 "Suck on, suck on, I glow, I glow!
 "Tides of maddening passion roll, 85
 "And streams of rapture drown my soul.
 "Now give me one more billing kiss,
 "Let your lips now repeat the bliss,
 "Endless kisses steal my breath,
 "No life can equal such a death." 90

CHARLOTTE.

"Oh! yes I will kiss thine eyes so fair,
 "And I will clasp thy form;
 "Serene is the breath of the balmy air,
 "But I think, love, thou feelest me warm.
 "And I will recline on thy marble neck 95
 "Till I mingle into thee.
 "And I will kiss the rose on thy cheek,
 "And thou shalt give kisses to me.
 "For here is no morn to flout our delight,
 "Oh! dost thou not joy at this? 100
 "And here we may lye an endless night,
 "A long, long night of bliss."

Spirits! when raptures move,
 Say what it is to love,
 When passion's tear stands on the cheek, 105
 When bursts the unconscious sigh;
 And the tremulous lips dare not speak
 What is told by the soul-felt eye.
 But what is sweeter to revenge's ear
 Than the fell tyrant's last expiring yell? 110
 Yes! than love's sweetest blisses 'tis more dear
 To drink the floatings of a despot's knell.
 I wake—'tis done—'tis o'er. * *

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 * * * * *

DESPAIR.

AND can'st thou mock mine agony, thus calm
 In cloudless radiance, Queen of silver night?
 Can you, ye flow'rets, spread your perfumed balm
 'Mid pearly gems of dew that shine so bright?
 And you wild winds, thus can you sleep so still 5
 Whilst throbs the tempest of my breast so high?
 Can the fierce night-fiends rest on yonder hill,
 And, in the eternal mansions of the sky,
 Can the directors of the storm in powerless silence lie?
 Hark! I hear music on the zephyr's wing, 10
 Louder it floats along the unruffled sky;
 Some fairy sure has touch'd the viewless string—
 Now faint in distant air the murmurs die,
 Awhile it stills the tide of agony.
 Now—now it loftier swells—again stern woe 15
 Arises with the awakening melody.
 Again fierce torments, such as demons know,
 In bitterer, feller tide, on this torn bosom flow.
 Arise ye sightless spirits of the storm,
 Ye unseen minstrels of the ærial song, 20
 Pour the fierce tide around this lonely form,
 And roll the tempests wildest swell along.
 Dart the red lightning, wing the forked flash,
 Pour from thy cloud-form'd hills the thunder's roar;
 Arouse the whirlwind—and let ocean dash 25
 In fiercest tumult on the rocking shore,
 Destroy this life or let earth's fabric be no more.
 Yes! every tie that links me here is dead;
 Mysterious fate thy mandate I obey,
 Since hope and peace, and joy, for aye are fled, 30
 I come, terrific power, I come away,
 Then o'er this ruin'd soul let spirits of hell,
 In triumph, laughing wildly, mock its pain;
 And though with direst pangs mine heart-strings swell,
 I'll echo back their deadly yells again, 35
 Cursing the power that ne'er made aught in vain.

FRAGMENT.

YES! all is past—swift time has fled away,
 Yet its swell pauses on my sickening mind;
 How long will horror nerve this frame of clay?
 I'm dead, and lingers yet my soul behind.
 Oh! powerful fate, revoke thy deadly spell, 5
 And yet that may not ever, ever be,
 Heaven will not smile upon the work of hell;
 Ah! no, for heaven cannot smile on me;
 Fate, envious fate, has seal'd my wayward destiny.
 I sought the cold brink of the midnight surge, 10
 I sigh'd beneath its wave to hide my woes,
 The rising tempest sung a funeral dirge,
 And on the blast a frightful yell arose.
 Wild flew the meteors o'er the madden'd main,
 Wilder did grief athwart my bosom glare; 15
 Still'd was the unearthly howling, and a strain,
 Swell'd 'mid the tumult of the battling air,
 'Twas like a spirit's song, but yet more soft and fair.
 I met a maniac, like he was to me,
 I said—"Poor victim wherefore dost thou roam? 20
 "And canst thou not contend with agony,
 "That thus at midnight thou dost quit thine home?"
 "Ah there she sleeps: cold is her bloodless form,
 "And I will go to slumber in her grave;
 "And then our ghosts, whilst raves the madden'd storm,
 "Will sweep at midnight o'er the wilder'd wave; 25
 "Wilt thou our lowly beds with tears of pity lave?"
 "Ah! no, I cannot shed the pitying tear,
 "This breast is cold, this heart can feel no more;
 "But I can rest me on thy chilling bier, 30
 "Can shriek in horror to the tempest's roar."

* * * * *

THE SPECTRAL HORSEMAN.

'WHAT was the shriek that struck fancy's ear
As it sate on the ruins of time that is past?
Hark! it floats on the fitful blast of the wind,
And breathes to the pale moon a funeral sigh.
It is the Benshie's moan on the storm, 5
Or a shivering fiend that thirsting for sin,
Seeks murder and guilt when virtue sleeps,
Wing'd with the power of some ruthless king,
And sweeps o'er the breast of the prostrate plain.
It was not a fiend from the regions of hell 10
That poured its low moan on the stillness of night:
It was not a ghost of the guilty dead,
Nor a yelling vampire reeking with gore;
But aye at the close of seven years' end,
That voice is mixed with the swell of the storm 15
And aye at the close of seven years' end,
A shapeless shadow that sleeps on the hill
Awakens and floats on the mist of the heath.
It is not the shade of a murdered man,
Who has rushed uncalled to the throne of his God, 20
And howls in the pause of the eddying storm.
This voice is low, cold, hollow, and chill,
'Tis not heard by the ear, but is felt in the soul.
'Tis more frightful far than the death-demon's scream,
Or the laughter of fiends when they howl o'er the corpse
Of a man who has sold his soul to hell. 26
It tells the approach of a mystic form,
A white courser bears the shadowy sprite;
More thin they are than the mists of the mountain,
When the clear moonlight sleeps on the waveless lake.
More pale *his* cheek than the snows of Nithona 31
When winter rides on the northern blast,
And howls in the midst of the leafless wood.
Yet when the fierce swell of the tempest is raving,
And the whirlwinds howl in the caves of Inisfallen, 35
Still secure 'mid the wildest war of the sky,
The phantom courser scours the waste,

And his rider howls in the thunder's roar.
 O'er him the fierce bolts of avenging heaven
 Pause, as in fear, to strike his head. 40
 The meteors of midnight recoil from his figure,
 Yet the wildered peasant that oft passes by,
 With wonder beholds the blue flash thro' his form:
 And his voice, though faint as the sighs of the dead,
 The startled passenger shudders to hear, 45
 More distinct than the thunder's wildest roar.
 Then does the dragon, who chain'd in the caverns
 To eternity, curses the champion of Erin,
 Moan and yell loud at the lone hour of midnight,
 And twine his vast wreathes round the forms of the demons;
 Then in agony roll his death-swimming eye-balls, 51
 Though wilder'd by death, yet never to die!
 Then he shakes from his skeleton folds the nightmares,
 Who, shrieking in agony, seek the couch
 Of some fevered wretch who courts sleep in vain; 55
 Then the tombless ghosts of the guilty dead
 In horror pause on the fitful gale.
 They float on the swell of the eddying tempest,
 And scared seek the caves of gigantic * *
 Where their thin forms pour unearthly sounds 60
 On the blast that sweeps the breast of the lake,
 And mingles its swell with the moonlight air.

MELODY TO A SCENE OF FORMER TIMES.

ART thou indeed for ever gone,
 For ever, ever, lost to me?
 Must this poor bosom beat alone,
 Or beat at all, if not for thee?
 Ah! why was love to mortals given, 5
 To lift them to the height of heaven,
 Or dash them to the depths of hell?
 Yet I do not reproach thee dear!
 Ah! no, the agonies that swell
 This panting breast, this frenzied brain 10
 Might wake my ——'s slumb'ring tear.

Oh! heaven is witness I did love,
 And heaven does know I love thee still,
 Does know the fruitless sick'ning thrill,

When reason's judgment vainly strove 15
 To blot thee from my memory;
 But which might never, never be.

Oh! I appeal to that blest day
 When passion's wildest ecstasy
 Was coldness to the joys I knew, 20
 When every sorrow sunk away.
 Oh! I had never liv'd before,
 But now those blisses are no more.

And now I cease to live again,
 I do not blame thee love; ah no! 25
 The breast that feels this anguish'd woe
 Throbs for thy happiness alone.

Two years of speechless bliss are gone,
 I thank thee dearest for the dream.
 'Tis night—what faint and distant scream 30
 Comes on the wild and fitful blast?

It moans for pleasures that are past,
 It moans for days that are gone by.
 Oh! lagging hours how slow you fly!

I see a dark and lengthen'd vale, 35
 The black view closes with the tomb;
 But darker is the lowering gloom

That shades the intervening dale.
 In visioned slumber for awhile
 I seem again to share thy smile, 40
 I seem to hang upon thy tone.

Again you say, "confide in me,
 "For I am thine, and thine alone,
 "And thine must ever, ever be."

But oh! awak'ning still anew, 45
 Athwart my enanguish'd senses flew
 A fiercer, deadlier agony!

STANZA: "TREMBLE, KINGS!"

ADAPTED FROM THE MARSEILLAISE.

TREMBLE Kings despised of man!
 Ye traitors to your Country
 Tremble! Your parricidal plan
 At length shall meet its destiny ...
 We all are soldiers fit to fight
 But if we sink in glory's night
 Our mother EARTH will give ye new
 The brilliant pathway to pursue
 Which leads to DEATH or VICTORY ...

THE TEAR.

I.

OH! take the pure gem to where southerly breezes,
 Waft repose to some bosom as faithful as fair,
 In which the warm current of love never freezes,
 As it rises unmingled with selfishness there,
 Which, untainted by pride, unpolluted by care,
 Might dissolve the dim icedrop, might bid it arise,
 Too pure for these regions, to gleam in the skies.

II.

Or where the stern warrior, his country defending,
 Dares fearless the dark-rolling battle to pour,
 Or o'er the fell corpse of a dread tyrant bending,
 Where patriotism red with his guilt-reeking gore
 Plants liberty's flag on the slave-peopled shore,
 With victory's cry, with the shout of the free,
 Let it fly, taintless spirit, to mingle with thee.

III.

For I found the pure gem, when the daybeam returning,
 Ineffectual gleams on the snow-covered plain,
 When to others the wished-for arrival of morning
 Brings relief to long visions of soul-racking pain;
 But regret is an insult—to grieve is in vain:
 And why should we grieve that a spirit so fair
 Seeks Heaven to mix with its own kindred there?

IV.

But still 'twas some spirit of kindness descending
 To share in the load of mortality's woe,
 Who over thy lowly-built sepulchre bending
 Bade sympathy's tenderest tear-drop to flow.
 Not for *thee*, soft compassion, celestials did know,
 But if *angels* can weep, sure *man* may repine,
 May weep in mute grief o'er thy low-laid shrine.

V.

And did I then say, for the altar of glory,
 That the earliest, the loveliest of flowers I'd entwine,
 Tho' with millions of blood-reeking victims 'twas gory,
 Tho' the tears of the widow polluted its shrine,
 Tho' around it the orphans, the fatherless pine?
 Oh! Fame, all thy glories I'd yield for a tear
 To shed on the grave of a heart so sincere.

LOVE.

WHY is it said thou canst not live
 In a youthful breast and fair,
 Since thou eternal life canst give,
 Canst bloom for ever there?
 Since withering pain no power possesseth, 5
 Nor age, to blanch thy vermeil hue,
 Nor time's dread victor, death, confess'd,
 Though bathed with his poison dew,
 Still thou retain'st unchanging bloom,
 Fix'd tranquil, even in the tomb. 10
 And oh! when on the blest reviving
 The day-star dawns of love,
 Each energy of soul surviving
 More vivid, soars above,
 Hast thou ne'er felt a rapturous thrill, 15
 Like June's warm breath, athwart thee fly,
 O'er each idea then to steal,
 When other passions die?
 Felt it in some wild noonday dream,
 When sitting by the lonely stream, 20

Where Silence says, Mine is the dell;
And not a murmur from the plain,
And not an echo from the fell,
Disputes her silent reign.

BIGOTRY'S VICTIM.

I.

DARES the lama, most fleet of the sons of the wind,
The lion to rouse from his skull-covered lair?
When the tiger approaches can the fast-fleeting hind
Repose trust in his footsteps of air?
No! Abandon'd he sinks in a trance of despair,
The monster transfixes his prey,
On the sand flows his life-blood away;
Whilst India's rocks to his death-yells reply,
Protracting the horrible harmony.

II.

Yet the fowl of the desert, when danger encroaches,
Dares fearless to perish defending her brood,
Though the fiercest of cloud-piercing tyrants approaches,
Thirsting—aye, thirsting for blood;
And demands, like mankind, his brother for food;
Yet more lenient, more gentle than they;
For hunger, not glory, the prey
Must perish. Revenge does not howl in the dead,
Nor ambition with fame crown the murderer's head.

III.

Though weak, as the lama, that bounds on the mountains,
And endued not with fast-fleeting footsteps of air,
Yet, yet will I draw from the purest of fountains,
Though a fiercer than tiger is there.
Though more dreadful than death, it scatters despair,
Though its shadow eclipses the day,
And the darkness of deepest dismay
Spreads the influence of soul-chilling terror around,
And lowers on the corpses, that rot on the ground.

IV.

They came to the fountain to draw from its stream,

Waves too pure, too celestial, for mortals to see;

They bathed for a while in its silvery beam,

Then perish'd, and perish'd like me.

For in vain from the grasp of the Bigot I flee;

The most tenderly loved of my soul

Are slaves to his hated control.

He pursues me, he blasts me! 'Tis in vain that I fly:

What remains, but to curse him,—to curse him and die?

TO THE MOONBEAM.

I.

MOONBEAM, leave the shadowy vale,

To bathe this burning brow.

Moonbeam, why art thou so pale,

As thou walkest o'er the dewy dale,

Where humble wild flowers grow?

Is it to mimic me?

But that can never be;

For thine orb is bright,

And the clouds are light,

That at intervals shadow the star-studded night.

II.

Now all is deathly still on earth,

Nature's tired frame reposes,

And ere the golden morning's birth

Its radiant hues discloses,

Flies forth its balmy breath.

But mine is the midnight of Death,

And Nature's morn,

To my bosom forlorn,

Brings but a gloomier night, implants a deadlier thorn.

III.

Wretch! Suppress the glare of madness

Struggling in thine haggard eye,

For the keenest throb of sadness,

Pale Despair's most sickening sigh,

Is but to mimic me;
 And this must ever be,
 When the twilight of care,
 And the night of despair,
 Seem in my breast but joys to the pangs, that wake there.

FRAGMENT ON A FÊTE AT CARLTON HOUSE.

By the mossy brink,
 With me the Prince shall sit and think;
 Shall muse in visioned Regency,
 Rapt in bright dreams of dawning Royalty.

TO ———.

O THOU
 Whose dear love gleamed upon the gloomy path
 Which this lone spirit travelled, drear and cold
 But swiftly leading to those awful limits
 Which mark the bounds of time, and of the space
 When time shall be no more,—wilt thou not turn
 Those spirit-beaming eyes, and look on me,
 Until I be assured that earth is heaven,
 And heaven is earth?

TO A STAR.

SWEET star, which gleaming o'er the darksome scene
 Through fleecy clouds of silvery radiance flyest,
 Spanglet of light on evening's shadowy veil,
 Which shrouds the day-beam from the waveless lake,
 Lighting the hour of sacred love; more sweet
 Than the expiring morn-star's paly fires.
 Sweet star! When wearied Nature sinks to sleep,
 And all is hushed,—all, save the voice of Love,
 Whose broken murmurings swell the balmy blast
 Of soft Favonius, which at intervals
 Sighs in the ear of stillness, art thou aught but

Lulling the slaves of interest to repose
 With that mild, pitying gaze! Oh, I would look
 In thy dear beam till every bond of sense
 Became enamoured——

LOVE'S ROSE.

I.

HOPES, that swell in youthful breasts,
 Live they this, the waste of time?
 Love's rose a host of thorns invests;
 Cold, ungenial is the clime,
 Where its honours blow.
 Youth says, The purple flowers are mine,
 Which die the while they glow.

II.

Dear the boon to Fancy given,
 Retracted whilst it's granted:
 Sweet the rose which lives in heaven,
 Although on earth 'tis planted,
 Where its honours blow,
 While by earth's slaves the leaves are riven
 Which die the while they glow.

III.

Age cannot Love destroy,
 But perfidy can blast the flower,
 Even when in most unwary hour
 It blooms in Fancy's bower.
 Age cannot Love destroy,
 But perfidy can rend the shrine
 In which its vermeil splendours shine.

TO MARY, WHO DIED IN THIS OPINION.

I.

MAIDEN, quench the glare of sorrow
 Struggling in thine haggard eye:
 Firmness dare to borrow
 From the wreck of destiny;

For the ray morn's bloom revealing
 Can never boast so bright an hue
 As that which mocks concealing,
 And sheds its loveliest light on you.

II.

Yet is the tie departed
 Which bound thy lovely soul to bliss?
 Has it left thee broken hearted
 In a world so cold as this!
 Yet, though, fainting fair one,
 Sorrow's self thy cup has given,
 Dream thou'lt meet thy dear one,
 Never more to part, in heaven.

III.

Existence would I barter
 For a dream so dear as thine,
 And smile to die a martyr
 On affection's bloodless shrine.
 Nor would I change for pleasure
 That withered hand and ashy cheek,
 If my heart enshrined a treasure
 Such as forces thine to break.

MOTHER AND SON.

I.

SHE was an aged woman; and the years
 Which she had numbered on her toilsome way
 Had bowed her natural powers to decay.
 She was an aged woman; yet the ray
 Which faintly glimmered through her starting tears,
 Pressed into light by silent misery,
 Hath soul's imperishable energy.
 She was a cripple, and incapable
 To add one mite to gold-fed luxury:
 And therefore did her spirit dimly feel
 That poverty, the crime of tainting stain,
 Would merge her in its depths, never to rise again.

II.

One only son's love had supported her.

She long had struggled with infirmity,

Lingering to human life-scenes; for to die,

When fate has spared to rend some mental tie,
Would many wish, and surely fewer dare.

But, when the tyrant's bloodhounds forced the child
For his cursed power unhallowed arms to wield—

Bend to another's will—become a thing
More senseless than the sword of battle field—

Then did she feel keen sorrow's keenest sting;
And many years had passed ere comfort they would bring.

III.

For seven years did this poor woman live

In unparticipated solitude.

Thou mightst have seen her in the forest rude

Picking the scattered remnants of its wood.

If human, thou mightst then have learned to feel.

The gleanings of precarious charity

Her scantiness of food did scarce supply.

The proofs of an unspeaking sorrow dwelt

Within her ghastly hollowness of eye:

Each arrow of the season's change she felt.

Yet still she groans, ere yet her race were run,

One only hope: it was—once more to see her son.

IV.

It was an eve of June, when every star

Spoke peace from heaven.—

She rested on the moor. 'Twas such an eve

When first her soul began indeed to grieve:

Then he was there; now he is very far.

The sweetness of the balmy evening

A sorrow o'er her aged soul did fling,

Yet not devoid of rapture's mingled tear:

A balm was in the poison of the sting.

This aged sufferer for many a year

Had never felt such comfort. She suppressed

A sigh—and turning round, clasped William to her breast!

V.

And, though his form was wasted by the woe

Which tyrants on their victims love to wreak,
 Though his sunk eyeballs and his faded cheek
 Of slavery's violence and scorn did speak,
 Yet did the aged woman's bosom glow.
 The vital fire seemed reillumed within
 By this sweet unexpected welcoming.

Oh consummation of the fondest hope
 That ever soared on fancy's wildest wing!

Oh tenderness that found'st so sweet a scope!
 Prince who dost pride thee on thy mighty sway,
 When *thou* canst feel such love, thou shalt be great as they!

VI.

Her son, compelled, the country's foes had fought,
 Had bled in battle; and the stern control
 Which ruled his sinews and coerced his soul
 Utterly poisoned life's unmingled bowl,
 And unsubduable evils on him brought.

He was the shadow of the lusty child
 Who, when the time of summer season smiled,
 Did earn for her a meal of honesty,
 And with affectionate discourse beguiled

The keen attacks of pain and poverty;
 Till Power, as envying her this only joy,
 From her maternal bosom tore the unhappy boy.

VII.

And now cold charity's unwelcome dole
 Was insufficient to support the pair;
 And they would perish rather than would bear
 The law's stern slavery, and the insolent stare
 With which law loves to rend the poor man's soul—
 The bitter scorn, the spirit-sinking noise
 Of heartless mirth which women, men, and boys,
 Wake in this scene of legal misery.

* * * *

THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION.

I.

BROTHERS! between you and me
 Whirlwinds sweep and billows roar:

Yet in spirit oft I see

On thy wild and winding shore
Freedom's bloodless banners wave,—
Feel the pulses of the brave
Unextinguished in the grave,—

See them drenched in sacred gore,—
Catch the warrior's gasping breath
Murmuring "Liberty or death!"

II.

Shout aloud! Let every slave,

Crouching at Corruption's throne,
Start into a man, and brave

Racks and chains without a groan;
And the castle's heartless glow,
And the hovel's vice and woe,
Fade like gaudy flowers that blow—

Weeds that peep, and then are gone;
Whilst, from misery's ashes risen,
Love shall burst the captive's prison.

III.

Cotopaxi! bid the sound

Through thy sister mountains ring,
Till each valley smile around

At the blissful welcoming!
And O thou stern Ocean deep,
Thou whose foamy billows sweep
Shores where thousands wake to weep

Whilst they curse a villain king,
On the winds that fan thy breast
Bear thou news of Freedom's rest!

IV.

Ere the daystar dawn of love,

Where the flag of war unfurled
Floats with crimson stain above

The fabric of a ruined world—
Never but to vengeance driven
When the patriot's spirit shriven
Seeks in death its native heaven!

There, to desolation hurled,
Widowed love may watch thy bier,
Balm thee with its dying tear.

TO IRELAND.

BEAR witness, Erin! when thine injured isle
Sees summer on its verdant pastures smile,
Its cornfields waving in the winds that sweep
The billowy surface of thy circling deep.
Thou tree whose shadow o'er the Atlantic gave
Peace, wealth, and beauty, to its friendly wave,
 its blossoms fade,
And blighted are the leaves that cast its shade;
Whilst the cold hand gathers its scanty fruit,
Whose chillness struck a canker to its root.

EYES.

How eloquent are eyes!
Not the rapt soul's frenzied lay
When the soul's wildest feelings stray
Can speak so well as they.
How eloquent are eyes!
Not music's most impassioned note
On which love's warmest fervours float
Like them bids rapture rise.
Love, look thus again,—
That your look may lighten a waste of years,
Darting the beam that conquers cares
Through the cold shower of tears.
Love, look thus again!

TO THE QUEEN OF MY HEART.

I.
SHALL we roam, my love,
To the twilight grove,
 When the moon is rising bright;
Oh, I'll whisper there,
In the cool night-air,
 What I dare not in broad day-light!

II.

I'll tell thee a part
Of the thoughts that start
 To being when thou art nigh;
And thy beauty, more bright
Than the stars' soft light,
 Shall seem as a weft from the sky.

III.

When the pale moonbeam
On tower and stream
 Sheds a flood of silver sheen,
How I love to gaze
As the cold ray strays
 O'er thy face, my heart's throned queen!

IV.

Wilt thou roam with me
To the restless sea,
 And linger upon the steep,
And list to the flow
Of the waves below
 How they toss and roar and leap?

V.

Those boiling waves
And the storm that raves
 At night o'er their foaming crest,
Resemble the strife
That, from earliest life,
 The passions have waged in my breast.

VI.

Oh, come then and rove
To the sea or the grove
 When the moon is rising bright,
And I'll whisper there
In the cool night-air
 What I dare not in broad day-light.

THE DEVIL'S WALK,

A BALLAD.

I.

ONCE, early in the morning,
Beelzebub arose,
With care his sweet person adorning,
He put on his Sunday clothes.

II.

He drew on a boot to hide his hoof,
He drew on a glove to hide his claw,
His horns were concealed by a *Bras Chapeau*,
And the Devil went forth as natty a *Beau*,
As Bond-street ever saw.

III.

He sate him down, in London town,
Before earth's morning ray,
With a favourite imp he began to chat,
On religion, and scandal, this and that,
Until the dawn of day.

IV.

And then to St. James's court he went,
And St. Paul's Church he took on his way,
He was mighty thick with every Saint,
Tho' they were formal and he was gay.

V.

The Devil was an agriculturist,
And as bad weeds quickly grow,
In looking over his farm, I wist
He wouldn't find cause for woe.

VI.

He peeped in each hole, to each chamber stole,
His promising live-stock to view;
Grinning applause, he just showed them his claws,
And they shrunk with affright from his ugly sight,
Whose work they delighted to do.

VII.

Satan poked his red nose into crannies so small,
One would think that the innocents fair,

Poor lambkins! were just doing nothing at all,
But settling some dress or arranging some ball,
But the Devil saw deeper there.

VIII.

A Priest, at whose elbow the Devil during prayer,
Sate familiarly, side by side,
Declared, that if the tempter were there,
His presence he would not abide.
Ah! Ah! thought Old Nick, that's a very stale trick,
For without the Devil, O! favourite of evil,
In your carriage you would not ride.

IX.

Satan next saw a brainless King,
Whose house was as hot as his own,
Many imps in attendance were there on the wing,
They flapped the pennon and twisted the sting,
Close by the very Throne.

X.

Ah, ha! thought Satan, the pasture is good,
My Cattle will here thrive better than others,
They dine on news of human blood,
They sup on the groans of the dying and dead,
And supperless never will go to bed;
Which will make them fat as their brothers.

XI.

Fat as the fiends that feed on blood,
Fresh and warm from the fields of Spain,
Where ruin ploughs her gory way,
When the shoots of earth are nipped in the bud,
Where Hell is the Victor's prey,
Its glory the meed of the slain.

XII.

Fat—as the death-birds on Erin's shore,
That glutted themselves in her dearest gore,
And flitted round Castlereagh,
When they snatched the Patriot's heart, that *his* grasp
Had torn from its widow's maniac clasp,
And fled at the dawn of day.

XIII.

Fat—as the reptiles of the tomb,
That riot in corruption's spoil,
That fret their little hour in gloom,
And creep, and live the while.

XIV.

Fat as that Prince's maudlin brain,
Which addled by some gilded toy,
Tired, gives his sweetmeat, and again
Cries for it, like a humoured boy.

XV.

For he is fat, his waistcoat gay,
When strained upon a levee day,
Scarce meets across his princely paunch,
And pantaloons are like half moons
Upon each brawny haunch.

XVI.

How vast his stock of calf! when plenty
Had filled his empty head and heart,
Enough to satiate foplings twenty,
Could make his pantaloons seams start.

XVII.

The Devil, (who sometimes is called nature,)
For men of power provides thus well,
Whilst every change and every feature,
Their great original can tell.

XVIII.

Satan saw a lawyer, a viper slay,
That crawled up the leg of his table,
It reminded him most marvellously,
Of the story of Cain and Abel.

XIX.

The wealthy yeoman, as he wanders,
His fertile fields among,
And on his thriving cattle ponders,
Counts his sure gains, and hums a song;
Thus did the Devil, thro' earth walking,
Hum low a hellish song.

XX.

For they thrive well, whose garb of gore,
Is Satan's choicest livery,
And they thrive well, who from the poor,
Have snatched the bread of penury,
And heap the houseless wanderer's store,
On the rank pile of luxury.

XXI.

The Bishops thrive, tho' they are big,
The Lawyers thrive, tho' they are thin;
For every gown, and every wig,
Hides the safe thrift of Hell within.

XXII.

Thus pigs were never counted clean,
Altho' they dine on finest corn;
And cormorants are sin-like lean,
Altho' they eat from night to morn.

XXIII.

Oh! why is the Father of Hell in such glee,
As he grins from ear to ear?
Why does he doff his clothes joyfully,
As he skips, and prances, and flaps his wing,
As he sidles, leers, and twirls his sting,
And dares, as he is, to appear?

XXIV.

A statesman pass'd—alone to him,
The Devil dare his whole shape uncover,
To show each feature, every limb,
Secure of an unchanging lover.

XXV.

At this known sign, a welcome sight,
The watchful demons sought their King,
And every fiend of the Stygian night,
Was in an instant on the wing.

XXVI.

Pale Loyalty, his guilt steeled brow,
With wreaths of gory laurel crowned:
The hell-hounds, Murder, Want and Woe,
For ever hungering flocked around;

From Spain had Satan sought their food,
'Twas human woe and human blood!

XXVII.

Hark the earthquake's crash I hear,
Kings turn pale, and Conquerors start,
Ruffians tremble in their fear,
For their Satan doth depart.

XXVIII.

This day fiends give to revelry,
To celebrate their King's return,
And with delight its sire to see,
Hell's adamantine limits burn.

XXIX.

But were the Devil's sight as keen
As Reason's penetrating eye,
His sulphurous Majesty I ween,
Would find but little cause for joy.

XXX.

For the sons of Reason see,
That ere fate consume the Pole,
The false Tyrant's cheek shall be,
Bloodless as his coward soul.

QUEEN MAB;

A

PHILOSOPHICAL POEM:

WITH NOTES.

BY

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

ECRASEZ L'INFAME !

Correspondance de Voltaire.

Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante
 Trita solo; juvat integros accedere fonteis;
 Atque haurire: juvatque novos decerpere flores.

* * * * *

Unde prius nulli velarint tempora musæ.
 Primum quod magnis doceo de rebus; et arctis
 Religionum animos nodis exsolvere pergo.

*Lucræt. lib. iv.**Δος πρῶτον, καὶ κοσμον κινῶν.**Archimedes.*

TO HARRIET * * * * *

WHOSE is the love that gleaming through the world,
 Wards off the poisonous arrow of its scorn?

Whose is the warm and partial praise,
 Virtue's most sweet reward?

Beneath whose looks did my reviving soul
 Riper in truth and virtuous daring grow?

Whose eyes have I gazed fondly on,
 And loved mankind the more?

HARRIET! on thine:—thou wert my purer mind;
 Thou wert the inspiration of my song;

Thine are these early wilding flowers,
Though garlanded by me.

Then press into thy breast this pledge of love;
And know, though time may change and years may roll,
Each floweret gathered in my heart
It consecrates to thine.

QUEEN MAB.

I.

How wonderful is Death,
Death and his brother Sleep!
One, pale as yonder waning moon
With lips of lurid blue;
The other, rosy as the morn
When throned on ocean's wave
It blushes o'er the world:
Yet both so passing wonderful!

5

Hath then the gloomy Power
Whose reign is in the tainted sepulchres
Seized on her sinless soul?
Must then that peerless form
Which love and admiration cannot view
Without a beating heart, those azure veins
Which steal like streams along a field of snow,
That lovely outline, which is fair
As breathing marble, perish?
Must putrefaction's breath
Leave nothing of this heavenly sight
But loathsomeness and ruin?
Spare nothing but a gloomy theme,
On which the lightest heart might moralize?
Or is it only a sweet slumber
Stealing o'er sensation,
Which the breath of roseate morning

10

15

20

25

Chaseth into darkness?
Will Ianthe wake again,
And give that faithful bosom joy
Whose sleepless spirit waits to catch
Light, life and rapture from her smile? 30

Yes! she will wake again,
Although her glowing limbs are motionless,
And silent those sweet lips,
Once breathing eloquence,
That might have soothed a tiger's rage, 35
Or thawed the cold heart of a conqueror.
Her dewy eyes are closed,
And on their lids, whose texture fine
Scarce hides the dark blue orbs beneath,
The baby Sleep is pillowed: 40
Her golden tresses shade
The bosom's stainless pride,
Curling like tendrils of the parasite
Around a marble column.

Hark! whence that rushing sound? 45
'Tis like the wondrous strain
That round a lonely ruin swells,
Which, wandering on the echoing shore,
The enthusiast hears at evening:
'Tis softer than the west wind's sigh; 50
'Tis wilder than the unmeasured notes
Of that strange lyre whose strings
The genii of the breezes sweep:
Those lines of rainbow light
Are like the moonbeams when they fall 55
Through some cathedral window, but the tints
Are such as may not find
Comparison on earth.

Behold the chariot of the Fairy Queen!
Celestial coursers paw the unyielding air; 60
Their filmy pennons at her word they furl,
And stop obedient to the reins of light:

These the Queen of spells drew in,
 She spread a charm around the spot,
 And leaning graceful from the etherial car, 63
 Long did she gaze, and silently,
 Upon the slumbering maid.

Oh! not the visioned poet in his dreams,
 When silvery clouds float through the wildered brain,
 When every sight of lovely, wild and grand 70
 Astonishes, enraptures, elevates,
 When fancy at a glance combines
 The wondrous and the beautiful,—
 So bright, so fair, so wild a shape
 Hath ever yet beheld, 75
 As that which reined the coursers of the air,
 And poured the magic of her gaze
 Upon the maiden's sleep.

The broad and yellow moon
 Shone dimly through her form— 80
 That form of faultless symmetry;
 The pearly and pellucid car
 Moved not the moonlight's line:
 'Twas not an earthly pageant:
 Those who had looked upon the sight, 85
 Passing all human glory,
 Saw not the yellow moon,
 Saw not the mortal scene,
 Heard not the night-wind's rush,
 Heard not an earthly sound, 90
 Saw but the fairy pageant,
 Heard but the heavenly strains
 That filled the lonely dwelling.

The Fairy's frame was slight, yon fibrous cloud,
 That catches but the palest tinge of even, 95
 And which the straining eye can hardly seize
 When melting into eastern twilight's shadow,
 Were scarce so thin, so slight; but the fair star
 That gems the glittering coronet of morn,

Sheds not a light so mild, so powerful, 100
 As that which, bursting from the Fairy's form,
 Spread a purpureal halo round the scene,
 Yet with an undulating motion,
 Swayed to her outline gracefully.

From her celestial car 105
 The Fairy Queen descended,
 And thrice she waved her wand
 Circled with wreaths of amaranth:
 Her thin and misty form
 Moved with the moving air, 110
 And the clear silver tones,
 As thus she spoke, were such
 As are unheard by all but gifted ear.

FAIRY.

Stars! your balmiest influence shed!
 Elements! your wrath suspend! 115
 Sleep, Ocean, in the rocky bounds
 That circle thy domain!
 Let not a breath be seen to stir
 Around yon grass-grown ruin's height,
 Let even the restless gossamer 120
 Sleep on the moveless air!
 Soul of Ianthe! thou,
 Judged alone worthy of the envied boon,
 That waits the good and the sincere; that waits
 Those who have struggled, and with resolute will 125
 Vanquished earth's pride and meanness, burst the chains,
 The icy chains of custom, and have shone
 The day-stars of their age;—Soul of Ianthe!
 Awake! arise!

Sudden arose 130
 Ianthe's Soul; it stood
 All beautiful in naked purity,
 The perfect semblance of its bodily frame.
 Instinct with inexpressible beauty and grace,
 Each stain of earthliness 135
 Had passed away, it reassumed

Its native dignity, and stood
Immortal amid ruin.

Upon the couch the body lay
Wrapt in the depth of slumber: 140
Its features were fixed and meaningless,
Yet animal life was there,
And every organ yet performed
Its natural functions: 'twas a sight
Of wonder to behold the body and soul. 145
The self-same lineaments, the same
Marks of identity were there:
Yet, oh, how different! One aspires to Heaven,
Pants for its sempiternal heritage,
And ever-changing, ever-rising still, 150
Wantons in endless being.
The other, for a time the unwilling sport
Of circumstance and passion, struggles on;
Fleets through its sad duration rapidly:
Then like an useless and worn-out machine, 155
Rots, perishes, and passes.

FAIRY.

Spirit! who hast dived so deep;
Spirit! who hast soared so high;
Thou the fearless, thou the mild,
Accept the boon thy worth hath earned, 160
Ascend the car with me.

SPIRIT.

Do I dream? Is this new feeling
But a visioned ghost of slumber?
If indeed I am a soul,
A free, a disembodied soul, 165
Speak again to me.

FAIRY.

I am the Fairy MAB: to me 'tis given
The wonders of the human world to keep:
The secrets of the immeasurable past,
In the unfailing consciences of men, 170
Those stern, unflattering chroniclers, I find:
The future, from the causes which arise

In each event, I gather: not the sting
Which retributive memory implants
In the hard bosom of the selfish man; 175
Nor that extatic and exulting throb
Which virtue's votary feels when he sums up
The thoughts and actions of a well-spent day
Are unforeseen, unregistered by me:
And it is yet permitted me, to rend 180
The veil of mortal frailty, that the spirit
Clothed in its changeless purity, may know
How soonest to accomplish the great end
For which it hath its being, and may taste
That peace, which in the end all life will share. 185
This is the meed of virtue; happy Soul,
Ascend the car with me!

The chains of earth's immurement
Fell from Ianthe's spirit;
They shrank and brake like bandages of straw 190
Beneath a wakened giant's strength.
She knew her glorious change,
And felt in apprehension uncontrolled
New raptures opening round:
Each day-dream of her mortal life, 195
Each frenzied vision of the slumbers
That closed each well-spent day,
Seemed now to meet reality.

The Fairy and the Soul proceeded;
The silver clouds parted; 200
And as the car of magic they ascended,
Again the speechless music swelled,
Again the coursers of the air
Unfurled their azure pennons, and the Queen
Shaking the beamy reins 205
Bade them pursue their way.

The magic car moved on.
The night was fair, and countless stars
Studded heaven's dark blue vault,—
Just o'er the eastern wave 210

Peeped the first faint smile of morn :—
The magic car moved on—
From the celestial hoofs
The atmosphere in flaming sparkles flew,
And where the burning wheels
Eddied above the mountain's loftiest peak,
Was traced a line of lightning.
Now it flew far above a rock,
The utmost verge of earth,
The rival of the Andes, whose dark brow
Lowered o'er the silver sea.

215

220

Far, far below the chariot's path,
Calm as a slumbering babe,
Tremendous Ocean lay.
The mirror of its stillness shewed
The pale and waning stars,
The chariot's fiery track,
And the grey light of morn
Tinging those fleecy clouds
That canopied the dawn.
Seemed it, that the chariot's way
Lay through the midst of an immense concave,
Radiant with million constellations, tinged
With shades of infinite colour,
And semicircled with a belt
Flashing incessant meteors.

225

230

235

The magic car moved on.
As they approached their goal
The coursers seemed to gather speed;
The sea no longer was distinguished; earth
Appeared a vast and shadowy sphere;
The sun's unclouded orb
Rolled through the black concave;
Its rays of rapid light
Parted around the chariot's swifter course,
And fell, like ocean's feathery spray
Dashed from the boiling surge
Before a vessel's prow.

240

245

The magic car moved on.
 Earth's distant orb appeared 250
 The smallest light that twinkles in the heaven;
 Whilst round the chariot's way
 Innumerable systems rolled,
 And countless spheres diffused
 An ever-varying glory. 255
 It was a sight of wonder: some
 Were hornèd like the crescent moon;
 Some shed a mild and silver beam
 Like Hesperus o'er the western sea;
 Some dash'd athwart with trains of flame, 260
 Like worlds to death and ruin driven;
 Some shone like suns, and as the chariot passed,
 Eclipsed all other light.

Spirit of Nature! here!
 In this interminable wilderness 265
 Of worlds, at whose immensity
 Even soaring fancy staggers,
 Here is thy fitting temple.
 Yet not the lightest leaf
 That quivers to the passing breeze 270
 Is less instinct with thee:
 Yet not the meanest worm
 That lurks in graves and fattens on the dead
 Less shares thy eternal breath.
 Spirit of Nature! thou! 275
 Imperishable as this scene,
 Here is thy fitting temple.

II.

If solitude hath ever led thy steps
 To the wild ocean's echoing shore,
 And thou hast lingered there,
 Until the sun's broad orb
 Seemed resting on the burnished wave, 5
 Thou must have marked the lines
 Of purple gold, that motionless
 Hung o'er the sinking sphere:

Thou must have marked the billowy clouds
Edged with intolerable radiancy 10
 Towering like rocks of jet
 Crowned with a diamond wreath.
And yet there is a moment,
 When the sun's highest point
Peeps like a star o'er ocean's western edge, 15
When those far clouds of feathery gold,
 Shaded with deepest purple, gleam
 Like islands on a dark blue sea;
Then has thy fancy soared above the earth,
 And furl'd its wearied wing 20
 Within the Fairy's fane.

Yet not the golden islands
Gleaming in yon flood of light,
 Nor the feathery curtains
Stretching o'er the sun's bright couch, 25
 Nor the burnished ocean waves
 Paving that gorgeous dome,
So fair, so wonderful a sight
As Mab's ethereal palace could afford.
Yet likest evening's vault, that faery Hall ! 30
As Heaven, low resting on the wave, it spread
 Its floors of flashing light,
 Its vast and azure dome,
 Its fertile golden islands
 Floating on a silver sea; 35
Whilst suns their mingling beamings darted
Through clouds of circumambient darkness,
And pearly battlements around
Look'd o'er the immense of Heaven.

The magic car no longer moved. 40
 The Fairy and the Spirit
 Entered the Hall of Spells:
 Those golden clouds
That rolled in glittering billows
Beneath the azure canopy 45
With the ethereal footsteps, trembled not:
 The light and crimson mists,

Floating to strains of thrilling melody
Through that unearthly dwelling,
Yielded to every movement of the will. 50
Upon their passive swell the Spirit leaned,
And, for the varied bliss that pressed around,
Used not the glorious privilege
Of virtue and of wisdom.

Spirit! the Fairy said, 55
And pointed to the gorgeous dome,
This is a wondrous sight
And mocks all human grandeur;
But, were it virtue's only meed, to dwell
In a celestial palace, all resigned 60
To pleasurable impulses, immured
Within the prison of itself, the will
Of changeless nature would be unfulfilled.
Learn to make others happy. Spirit, come!
This is thine high reward:—the past shall rise; 65
Thou shalt behold the present; I will teach
The secrets of the future.

The Fairy and the Spirit
Approached the overhanging battlement.—
Below lay stretched the universe! 70
There, far as the remotest line
That bounds imagination's flight,
Countless and unending orbs
In mazy motion intermingled,
Yet still fulfilled immutably 75
Eternal nature's law.
Above, below, around
The circling systems formed
A wilderness of harmony;
Each with undeviating aim, 80
In eloquent silence, through the depths of space
Pursued its wondrous way.

There was a little light
That twinkled in the misty distance:

None but a spirit's eye 85
 Might ken that rolling orb;
 None but a spirit's eye,
 And in no other place
 But that celestial dwelling, might behold
 Each action of this earth's inhabitants. 90
 But matter, space and time
 In those ærial mansions cease to act;
 And all-prevailing wisdom, when it reaps
 The harvest of its excellence, o'erbounds
 Those obstacles, of which an earthly soul 95
 Fears to attempt the conquest.

The Fairy pointed to the earth.
 The Spirit's intellectual eye
 Its kindred beings recognized.
 The thronging thousands, to a passing view, 100
 Seemed like an anthill's citizens.
 How wonderful! that even
 The passions, prejudices, interests,
 That sway the meanest being, the weak touch
 That moves the finest nerve, 105
 And in one human brain .
 Causes the faintest thought, becomes a link
 In the great chain of nature.

Behold, the Fairy cried,
 Palmyra's ruined palaces!— 110
 Behold! where grandeur frowned;
 Behold! where pleasure smiled;
 What now remains?—the memory
 Of senselessness and shame—
 What is immortal there? 115
 Nothing—it stands to tell
 A melancholy tale, to give
 An awful warning: soon
 Oblivion will steal silently
 The remnant of its fame. 120
 Monarchs and conquerors there
 Proud o'er prostrate millions trod—

The earthquakes of the human race;
 Like them, forgotten when the ruin
 That marks their shock is past. 125

Beside the eternal Nile,
 The Pyramids have risen.
 Nile shall pursue his changeless way:
 Those pyramids shall fall;
 Yea! not a stone shall stand to tell 130
 The spot whereon they stood!
 Their very site shall be forgotten,
 As is their builder's name!

Behold yon sterile spot;
 Where now the wandering Arab's tent 135
 Flaps in the desert-blast.
 There once old Salem's haughty fane
 Reared high to heaven its thousand golden domes,
 And in the blushing face of day
 Exposed its shameful glory. 140
 Oh! many a widow, many an orphan cursed
 The building of that fane; and many a father,
 Worn out with toil and slavery, implored
 The poor man's God to sweep it from the earth,
 And spare his children the detested task 145
 Of piling stone on stone, and poisoning
 The choicest days of life,
 To soothe a dotard's vanity.

There an inhuman and uncultured race
 Howled hideous praises to their Demon-God; 150
 They rushed to war, tore from the mother's womb
 The unborn child,—old age and infancy
 Promiscuous perished; their victorious arms
 Left not a soul to breathe. Oh! they were fiends:
 But what was he who taught them that the God 155
 Of nature and benevolence hath given
 A special sanction to the trade of blood?
 His name and theirs are fading, and the tales
 Of this barbarian nation, which imposture
 Recites till terror credits, are pursuing 160
 Itself into forgetfulness.

Where Athens, Rome, and Sparta stood,
 There is a moral desert now :
 The mean and miserable huts,
 The yet more wretched palaces, 165
 Contrasted with those antient fanes,
 Now crumbling to oblivion ;
 The long and lonely colonnades,
 Through which the ghost of Freedom stalks,
 Seem like a well-known tune, 170
 Which, in some dear scene we have loved to hear,
 Remembered now in sadness.
 But, oh ! how much more changed,
 How gloomier is the contrast
 Of human nature there ! 175
 Where Socrates expired, a tyrant's slave,
 A coward and a fool, spreads death around—
 Then, shuddering, meets his own.
 Where Cicero and Antoninus lived,
 A cowed and hypocritical monk 180
 Prays, curses and deceives.
 Spirit ! ten thousand years
 Have scarcely past away,
 Since, in the waste where now the savage drinks
 His enemy's blood, and aping Europe's sons, 185
 Wakes the unholy song of war,
 Arose a stately city,
 Metropolis of the western continent :
 There, now, the mossy column-stone,
 Indented by time's unrelaxing grasp, 190
 Which once appeared to brave
 All, save its country's ruin ;
 There the wide forest scene,
 Rude in the uncultivated loveliness
 Of gardens long run wild, 195
 Seems, to the unwilling sojourner, whose steps
 Chance in that desert has delayed,
 Thus to have stood since earth was what it is.
 Yet once it was the busiest haunt,
 Whither, as to a common centre, flocked 200
 Strangers, and ships, and merchandize :

Once peace and freedom blest
The cultivated plain:
But wealth, that curse of man,
Blighted the bud of its prosperity: 205
Virtue and wisdom, truth and liberty,
Fled, to return not, until man shall know
That they alone can give the bliss
Worthy a soul that claims
Its kindred with eternity. 210

There's not one atom of yon earth
But once was living man;
Nor the minutest drop of rain,
That hangeth in its thinnest cloud,
But flowed in human veins: 215
And from the burning plains
Where Lybian monsters yell,
From the most gloomy glens
Of Greenland's sunless clime,
To where the golden fields 220
Of fertile England spread
Their harvest to the day,
Thou canst not find one spot
Whereon no city stood.

How strange is human pride!
I tell thee that those living things, 225
To whom the fragile blade of grass,
That springeth in the morn
And perisheth ere noon,
Is an unbounded world; 230
I tell thee that those viewless beings,
Whose mansion is the smallest particle
Of the impassive atmosphere,
Think, feel and live like man;
That their affections and antipathies, 235
Like his, produce the laws
Ruling their moral state;
And the minutest throb
That through their frame diffuses

The slightest, faintest motion,
Is fixed and indispensable
As the majestic laws
That rule yon rolling orbs.

240

The Fairy paused. The Spirit,
In extacy of admiration, felt
All knowledge of the past revived; the events
Of old and wondrous times,
Which dim tradition interruptedly
Teaches the credulous vulgar, were unfolded
In just perspective to the view;
Yet dim from their infinitude.

245

250

The Spirit seemed to stand
High on an isolated pinnacle;
The flood of ages combating below,
The depth of the unbounded universe
Above, and all around
Nature's unchanging harmony.

255

III.

FAIRY! the Spirit said,
And on the Queen of spells
Fixed her etherial eyes,
I thank thee. Thou hast given
A boon which I will not resign, and taught
A lesson not to be unlearned. I know
The past, and thence I will essay to glean
A warning for the future, so that man
May profit by his errors, and derive
Experience from his folly:
For, when the power of imparting joy
Is equal to the will, the human soul
Requires no other heaven.

5

10

MAB.

Turn thee, surpassing Spirit!
Much yet remains unscanned.
Thou knowest how great is man,
Thou knowest his imbecility:

15

Yet learn thou what he is;
Yet learn the lofty destiny
Which restless time prepares
For every living soul. 20

Behold a gorgeous palace, that, amid
Yon populous city, rears its thousand towers
And seems itself a city. Gloomy troops
Of centinels, in stern and silent ranks, 25
Encompass it around: the dweller there
Cannot be free and happy; hearest thou not
The curses of the fatherless, the groans
Of those who have no friend? He passes on:
The King, the wearer of a gilded chain 30
That binds his soul to abjectness, the fool
Whom courtiers nickname monarch, whilst a slave
Even to the basest appetites—that man
Heeds not the shriek of penury; he smiles
At the deep curses which the destitute 35
Mutter in secret, and a sullen joy
Pervades his bloodless heart when thousands groan
But for those morsels which his wantonness
Wastes in unjoyous revelry, to save
All that they love from famine: when he hears 40
The tale of horror, to some ready-made face
Of hypocritical assent he turns,
Smothering the glow of shame, that, spite of him,
Flushes his bloated cheek.

Now to the meal
Of silence, grandeur, and excess, he drags 45
His palled unwilling appetite. If gold,
Gleaming around, and numerous viands culled
From every clime, could force the loathing sense
To overcome satiety,—if wealth
The spring it draws from poisons not,—or vice, 50
Unfeeling, stubborn vice, converteth not
Its food to deadliest venom; then that king
Is happy; and the peasant who fulfils
His unforced task, when he returns at even,
And by the blazing faggot meets again 55

Her welcome for whom all his toil is sped,
Tastes not a sweeter meal.

Behold him now
Stretched on the gorgeous couch; his fevered brain
Reels dizzily awhile: but ah! too soon
The slumber of intemperance subsides, 60
And conscience, that undying serpent, calls
Her venomous brood to their nocturnal task.
Listen! he speaks! oh! mark that frenzied eye—
Oh! mark that deadly visage.

KING.

No cessation!
Oh! must this last for ever! Awful death, 65
I wish, yet fear to clasp thee!—Not one moment
Of dreamless sleep! O dear and blessed peace!
Why dost thou shroud thy vestal purity
In penury and dungeons? wherefore lurkest
With danger, death, and solitude; yet shun'st 70
The palace I have built thee? Sacred peace!
Oh visit me but once, but pitying shed
One drop of balm upon my withered soul.

Vain man! that palace is the virtuous heart,
And peace defleth not her snowy robes 75
In such a shed as thine. Hark! yet he mutters;
His slumbers are but varied agonies,
They prey like scorpions on the springs of life.
There needeth not the hell that bigots frame
To punish those who err: earth in itself 80
Contains at once the evil and the cure;
And all-sufficing nature can chastise
Those who transgress her law,—she only knows
How justly to proportion to the fault
The punishment it merits.

Is it strange 85
That this poor wretch should pride him in his woe?
Take pleasure in his abjectness, and hug
The scorpion that consumes him? Is it strange
That, placed on a conspicuous throne of thorns,
Grasping an iron sceptre, and immured 90

Within a splendid prison, whose stern bounds
 Shut him from all that's good or dear on earth,
 His soul asserts not its humanity?
 That man's mild nature rises not in war
 Against a king's employ? No—'tis not strange. 95
 He, like the vulgar, thinks, feels, acts and lives
 Just as his father did; the unconquered powers
 Of precedent and custom interpose
 Between a *king* and virtue. Stranger yet,
 To those who know not nature, nor deduce 100
 The future from the present, it may seem,
 That not one slave, who suffers from the crimes
 Of this unnatural being; not one wretch,
 Whose children famish, and whose nuptial bed
 Is earth's un pitying bosom, rears an arm 105
 To dash him from his throne!

Those gilded flies
 That, basking in the sunshine of a court,
 Fatten on its corruption!—what are they?
 —The drones of the community; they feed
 On the mechanic's labour: the starved hind 110
 For them compels the stubborn glebe to yield
 Its unshared harvests; and yon squalid form,
 Leaner than fleshless misery, that wastes
 A sunless life in the unwholesome mine,
 Drags out in labour a protracted death, 115
 To glut their grandeur; many faint with toil,
 That few may know the cares and woe of sloth.

Whence, thinkest thou, kings and parasites arose?
 Whence that unnatural line of drones, who heap
 Toil and unvanquishable penury 120
 On those who build their palaces, and bring
 Their daily bread?—From vice, black loathsome vice;
 From rapine, madness, treachery, and wrong;
 From all that genders misery, and makes
 Of earth this thorny wilderness; from lust, 125
 Revenge, and murder.....And when reason's voice,
 Loud as the voice of nature, shall have waked
 The nations; and mankind perceive that vice

Is discord, war, and misery; that virtue
 Is peace, and happiness and harmony; 130
 When man's maturer nature shall disdain
 The playthings of its childhood;—kingly glare
 Will lose its power to dazzle; its authority
 Will silently pass by; the gorgeous throne
 Shall stand unnoticed in the regal hall, 135
 Fast falling to decay; whilst falsehood's trade
 Shall be as hateful and unprofitable
 As that of truth is now.

Where is the fame
 Which the vain-glorious mighty of the earth
 Seek to eternize? Oh! the faintest sound 140
 From time's light footfall, the minutest wave
 That swells the flood of ages, whelms in nothing
 The unsubstantial bubble. Aye! to-day
 Stern is the tyrant's mandate, red the gaze
 That flashes desolation, strong the arm 145
 That scatters multitudes. To-morrow comes!
 That mandate is a thunder-peal that died
 In ages past; that gaze, a transient flash
 On which the midnight closed, and on that arm
 The worm has made his meal.

The virtuous man, 150
 Who, great in his humility, as kings
 Are little in their grandeur; he who leads
 Invincibly a life of resolute good,
 And stands amid the silent dungeon-depths
 More free and fearless than the trembling judge, 155
 Who, clothed in venal power, vainly strove
 To bind the impassive spirit;—when he falls,
 His mild eye beams benevolence no more:
 Withered the hand outstretched but to relieve;
 Sunk reason's simple eloquence, that rolled 160
 But to appal the guilty. Yes! the grave
 Hath quenched that eye, and death's relentless frost
 Withered that arm: but the unfading fame
 Which virtue hangs upon its votary's tomb;
 The deathless memory of that man, whom kings 165
 Call to their mind and tremble; the remembrance

With which the happy spirit contemplates
 Its well-spent pilgrimage on earth,
 Shall never pass away.

Nature rejects the monarch, not the man; 170
 The subject, not the citizen: for kings
 And subjects, mutual foes, for ever play
 A losing game into each other's hands,
 Whose stakes are vice and misery. The man
 Of virtuous soul commands not, nor obeys. 175
 Power, like a desolating pestilence,
 Pollutes whate'er it touches; and obedience,
 Bane of all genius, virtue, freedom, truth,
 Makes slaves of men, and, of the human frame,
 A mechanized automaton.

When Nero, 180
 High over flaming Rome, with savage joy
 Lowered like a fiend, drank with enraptured ear
 The shrieks of agonizing death, beheld
 The frightful desolation spread, and felt
 A new created sense within his soul 185
 Thrill to the sight, and vibrate to the sound;
 Thinkest thou his grandeur had not overcome
 The force of human kindness? and, when Rome,
 With one stern blow, hurled not the tyrant down,
 Crushed not the arm red with her dearest blood, 190
 Had not submissive abjectness destroyed
 Nature's suggestions?

Look on yonder earth:
 The golden harvests spring; the unfailing sun
 Sheds light and life; the fruits, the flowers, the trees,
 Arise in due succession; all things speak 195
 Peace, harmony, and love. The universe,
 In nature's silent eloquence, declares
 That all fulfil the works of love and joy,—
 All but the outcast man. He fabricates
 The sword which stabs his peace; he cherisheth 200
 The snakes that gnaw his heart; he raiseth up
 The tyrant, whose delight is in his woe,
 Whose sport is in his agony. Yon sun,

Lights it the great alone? Yon silver beams,
 Sleep they less sweetly on the cottage thatch, 205
 Than on the dome of kings? Is mother earth
 A step-dame to her numerous sons, who earn
 Her unshared gifts with unremitting toil;
 A mother only to those puling babes
 Who, nursed in ease and luxury, make men 210
 The playthings of their babyhood, and mar,
 In self-important childishness, that peace
 Which men alone appreciate?

Spirit of Nature! no.
 The pure diffusion of thy essence throbs 215
 Alike in every human heart.
 Thou, aye, erectest there
 Thy throne of power unappealable:
 Thou art the judge beneath whose nod
 Man's brief and frail authority 220
 Is powerless as the wind
 That passeth idly by.
 Thine the tribunal which surpasseth
 The shew of human justice,
 As God surpasses man, 225

Spirit of Nature! thou
 Life of interminable multitudes;
 Soul of those mighty spheres
 Whose changeless paths thro' Heaven's deep silence lie;
 Soul of that smallest being, 230
 The dwelling of whose life
 Is one faint April sun-gleam;—
 Man, like these passive things,
 Thy will unconsciously fulfilleth:
 Like theirs, his age of endless peace, 235
 Which time is fast maturing,
 Will swiftly, surely come;
 And the unbounded frame, which thou pervadest,
 Will be without a flaw
 Marring its perfect symmetry. 240

IV.

How beautiful this night! the balmiest sigh,
 Which vernal zephyrs breathe in evening's ear,
 Were discord to the speaking quietude
 That wraps this moveless scene. Heaven's ebon vault,
 Studded with stars unutterably bright, 5
 Through which the moon's unclouded grandeur rolls,
 Seems like a canopy which love had spread
 To curtain her sleeping world. Yon gentle hills,
 Robed in a garment of untrodden snow;
 Yon darksome rocks, whence icicles depend, 10
 So stainless, that their white and glittering spires
 Tinge not the moon's pure beam; yon castled steep,
 Whose banner hangeth o'er the time-worn tower
 So idly, that rapt fancy deemeth it
 A metaphor of peace;—all form a scene 15
 Where musing solitude might love to lift
 Her soul above this sphere of earthliness;
 Where silence undisturbed might watch alone,
 So cold, so bright, so still.

The orb of day,

In southern climes, o'er ocean's waveless field 20
 Sinks sweetly smiling: not the faintest breath
 Steals o'er the unruffled deep; the clouds of eve
 Reflect unmoved the lingering beam of day;
 And vesper's image on the western main
 Is beautifully still. To-morrow comes: 25
 Cloud upon cloud, in dark and deepening mass,
 Roll o'er the blackened waters; the deep roar
 Of distant thunder mutters awfully;
 Tempest unfolds its pinion o'er the gloom
 That shrouds the boiling surge; the pityless fiend, 30
 With all his winds and lightnings, tracks his prey;
 The torn deep yawns,—the vessel finds a grave
 Beneath its jagged gulph.

Ah! whence yon glare

That fires the arch of heaven?—that dark red smoke
 Blotting the silver moon? The stars are quenched 35
 In darkness, and the pure and spangling snow

Gleams faintly through the gloom that gathers round!
Hark to that roar, whose swift and deafning peals
In countless echoes through the mountains ring,
Startling pale midnight on her starry throne! 40
Now swells the intermingling din; the jar
Frequent and frightful of the bursting bomb;
The falling beam, the shriek, the groan, the shout,
The ceaseless clangor, and the rush of men
Inebriate with rage:—loud, and more loud 45
The discord grows; till pale death shuts the scene,
And o'er the conqueror and the conquered draws
His cold and bloody shroud.—Of all the men
Whom day's departing beam saw blooming there,
In proud and vigorous health; of all the hearts 50
That beat with anxious life at sun-set there;
How few survive, how few are beating now!
All is deep silence, like the fearful calm
That slumbers in the storm's portentous pause;
Save when the frantic wail of widowed love 55
Comes shuddering on the blast, or the faint moan
With which some soul bursts from the frame of clay
Wrapt round its struggling powers.

The grey morn
Dawns on the mournful scene; the sulphurous smoke
Before the icy wind slow rolls away, 60
And the bright beams of frosty morning dance
Along the spangling snow. There tracks of blood
Even to the forest's depth, and scattered arms,
And lifeless warriors, whose hard lineaments
Death's self could change not, mark the dreadful path
Of the outsallying victors: far behind, 66
Black ashes note where their proud city stood.
Within yon forest is a gloomy glen—
Each tree which guards its darkness from the day,
Waves o'er a warrior's tomb.

I see thee shrink, 70
Surpassing Spirit!—wert thou human else?
I see a shade of doubt and horror fleet
Across thy stainless features: yet fear not;
This is no unconnected misery,

Nor stands uncaused, and irretrievable. 75
 Man's evil nature, that apology
 Which kings who rule, and cowards who crouch, set up
 For their unnumbered crimes, sheds not the blood
 Which desolates the discord-wasted land.
 From kings, and priests, and statesmen, war arose, 80
 Whose safety is man's deep unbettered woe,
 Whose grandeur his debasement. Let the axe
 Strike at the root, the poison-tree will fall;
 And where its venom'd exhalations spread
 Ruin, and death, and woe, where millions lay -85
 Quenching the serpent's famine, and their bones
 Bleaching unburied in the putrid blast,
 A garden shall arise, in loveliness
 Surpassing fabled Eden.

Hath Nature's soul,
 That formed this world so beautiful, that spread 90
 Earth's lap with plenty, and life's smallest chord
 Strung to unchanging unison, that gave
 The happy birds their dwelling in the grove,
 That yielded to the wanderers of the deep
 The lovely silence of the unfathomed main, 95
 And filled the meanest worm that crawls in dust
 With spirit, thought, and love; on Man alone,
 Partial in causeless malice, wantonly
 Heaped ruin, vice, and slavery; his soul
 Blasted with withering curses; placed afar 100
 The meteor-happiness, that shuns his grasp,
 But serving on the frightful gulph to glare,
 Rent wide beneath his footsteps?

Nature!—no!
 Kings, priests, and statesmen, blast the human flower
 Even in its tender bud; their influence darts 105
 Like subtle poison through the bloodless veins
 Of desolate society. The child,
 Ere he can lisp his mother's sacred name,
 Swells with the unnatural pride of crime, and lifts
 His baby-sword even in a hero's mood. 110
 This infant-arm becomes the bloodiest scourge
 Of devastated earth; whilst specious names,

Learnt in soft childhood's unsuspecting hour,
Serve as the sophisms with which manhood dims
Bright reason's ray, and sanctifies the sword 115
Upraised to shed a brother's innocent blood.
Let priest-led slaves cease to proclaim that man
Inherits vice and misery, when force
And falsehood hang 'even o'er the cradled babe,
Stifling with rudest grasp all natural good. 120

Ah! to the stranger-soul, when first it peeps
From its new tenement, and looks abroad
For happiness and sympathy, how stern
And desolate a tract is this wide world!
How withered all the buds of natural good! 125
No shade, no shelter from the sweeping storms
Of pityless power! On its wretched frame,
Poisoned, perchance, by the disease and woe
Heaped on the wretched parent whence it sprung
By morals, law, and custom, the pure winds 130
Of heaven, that renovate the insect tribes,
May breathe not. The untainting light of day
May visit not its longings. It is bound
Ere it has life: yea, all the chains are forged
Long ere its being: all liberty and love 135
And peace is torn from its defencelessness;
Cursed from its birth, even from its cradle doomed
To abjectness and bondage!

Throughout this varied and eternal world
Soul is the only element, the block 140
That for uncounted ages has remained.
The moveless pillar of a mountain's weight
Is active, living spirit. Every grain
Is sentient both in unity and part,
And the minutest atom comprehends 145
A world of loves and hatreds; these beget
Evil and good: hence truth and falsehood spring;
Hence will and thought and action, all the germs
Of pain or pleasure, sympathy or hate,
That variegate the eternal universe. 150

Soul is not more polluted than the beams
Of heaven's pure orb, ere round their rapid lines
The taint of earth-born atmospheres arise.

Man is of soul and body, formed for deeds
Of high resolve, on fancy's boldest wing 155
To soar unwearied, fearlessly to turn
The keenest pangs to peacefulness, and taste
The joys which mingled sense and spirit yield.
Or he is formed for abjectness and woe,
To grovel on the dunghill of his fears, 160
To shrink at every sound, to quench the flame
Of natural love in sensualism, to know
That hour as blest when on his worthless days
The frozen hand of death shall set its seal,
Yet fear the cure, though hating the disease. 165
The one is man that shall hereafter be;
The other, man as vice has made him now.

War is the statesman's game, the priest's delight,
The lawyer's jest, the hired assassin's trade,
And, to those royal murderers, whose mean thrones 170
Are bought by crimes of treachery and gore,
The bread they eat, the staff on which they lean.
Guards, garbed in blood-red livery, surround
Their palaces, participate the crimes
That force defends, and from a nation's rage 175
Secure the crown, which all the curses reach
That famine, frenzy, woe and penury breathe.
These are the hired bravos who defend
The tyrant's throne—the bullies of his fear:
These are the sinks and channels of worst vice, 180
The refuse of society, the dregs
Of all that is most vile: their cold hearts blend
Deceit with sternness, ignorance with pride,
All that is mean and villainous, with rage
Which hopelessness of good, and self-contempt, 185
Alone might kindle; they are decked in wealth,
Honour and power, then are sent abroad
To do their work. The pestilence that stalks

In gloomy triumph through some eastern land
Is less destroying. They cajole with gold, 190
And promises of fame, the thoughtless youth
Already crushed with servitude: he knows
His wretchedness too late, and cherishes
Repentance for his ruin, when his doom
Is sealed in gold and blood! 195
Those too the tyrant serve, who, skilled to snare
The feet of justice in the toils of law,
Stand, ready to oppress the weaker still;
And, right or wrong, will vindicate for gold,
Sneering at public virtue, which beneath 200
Their pitiless tread lies torn and trampled, where
Honour sits smiling at the sale of truth.

Then grave and hoary-headed hypocrites,
Without a hope, a passion, or a love,
Who, through a life of luxury and lies, 205
Have crept by flattery to the seats of power,
Support the system whence their honours flow....
They have three words:—well tyrants know their use,
Well pay them for the loan, with usury
Torn from a bleeding world!—God, Hell, and Heaven.
A vengeful, pitiless, and almighty fiend, 211
Whose mercy is a nick-name for the rage
Of tameless tigers hungering for blood.
Hell, a red gulph of everlasting fire,
Where poisonous and undying worms prolong 215
Eternal misery to those hapless slaves
Whose life has been a penance for its crimes.
And Heaven, a meed for those who dare belie
Their human nature, quake, believe, and cringe
Before the mockeries of earthly power. 220

These tools the tyrant tempers to his work,
Wields in his wrath, and as he wills destroys,
Omnipotent in wickedness: the while
Youth springs, age moulders, manhood tamely does
His bidding, bribed by short-lived joys to lend 225
Force to the weakness of his trembling arm.

They rise, they fall; one generation comes
 Yielding its harvest to destruction's scythe.
 It fades, another blossoms: yet behold!
 Red glows the tyrant's stamp-mark on its bloom, 230
 Withering and cankering deep its passive prime.
 He has invented lying words and modes,
 Empty and vain as his own coreless heart;
 Evasive meanings, nothings of much sound,
 To lure the heedless victim to the toils 235
 Spread round the valley of its paradise.

Look to thyself, priest, conqueror, or prince!
 Whether thy trade is falsehood, and thy lusts
 Deep wallow in the earnings of the poor,
 With whom thy master was:—or thou delightst 240
 In numbering o'er the myriads of thy slain,
 All misery weighing nothing in the scale
 Against thy short-lived fame: or thou dost load
 With cowardice and crime the groaning land,
 A pomp-fed king. Look to thy wretched self! 245
 Aye, art thou not the veriest slave that e'er
 Crawled on the loathing earth? Are not thy days
 Days of unsatisfying listlessness?
 Dost thou not cry, ere night's long rack is o'er,
 When will the morning come? Is not thy youth 250
 A vain and feverish dream of sensualism?
 Thy manhood blighted with unripe disease?
 Are not thy views of unregretted death
 Drear, comfortless, and horrible? Thy mind,
 Is it not morbid as thy nerveless frame, 255
 Incapable of judgment, hope, or love?
 And dost thou wish the errors to survive
 That bar thee from all sympathies of good,
 After the miserable interest
 Thou holdst in their protraction? When the grave 260
 Has swallowed up thy memory and thyself,
 Dost thou desire the bane that poisons earth
 To twine its roots around thy confined clay,
 Spring from thy bones, and blossom on thy tomb,
 That of its fruit thy babes may eat and die? 265

V.

THUS do the generations of the earth
Go to the grave, and issue from the womb,
Surviving still the imperishable change
That renovates the world; even as the leaves
Which the keen frost-wind of the waning year 5
Has scattered on the forest soil, and heaped
For many seasons there, though long they choke,
Loading with loathsome rottenness the land,
All germs of promise. Yet when the tall trees
From which they fell, shorn of their lovely shapes, 10
Lie level with the earth to moulder there,
They fertilize the land they long deformed,
Till from the breathing lawn a forest springs
Of youth, integrity, and loveliness,
Like that which gave it life, to spring and die. 15
Thus suicidal selfishness, that blights
The fairest feelings of the opening heart,
Is destined to decay, whilst from the soil
Shall spring all virtue, all delight, all love,
And judgment cease to wage unnatural war 20
With passion's unsubduable array.
Twin-sister of religion, selfishness!
Rival in crime and falsehood, aping all
The wanton horrors of her bloody play;
Yet frozen, unimpassioned, spiritless, 25
Shunning the light, and owning not its name,
Compelled, by its deformity, to screen
With flimsy veil of justice and of right,
Its unattractive lineaments, that scare
All, save the brood of ignorance: at once 30
The cause and the effect of tyranny;
Unblushing, hardened, sensual, and vile;
Dead to all love but of its abjectness,
With heart impassive by more noble powers
Than unshared pleasure, sordid gain, or fame; 35
Despising its own miserable being,
Which still it longs, yet fears to disenthral.

Hence commerce springs, the venal interchange
Of all that human art or nature yield; 39
Which wealth should purchase not, but want demand,
And natural kindness hasten to supply
From the full fountain of its boundless love,
For ever stifled, drained, and tainted now.
Commerce! beneath whose poison-breathing shade
No solitary virtue dares to spring, 45
But poverty and wealth with equal hand
Scatter their withering curses, and unfold
The doors of premature and violent death,
To pining famine and full-fed disease,
To all that shares the lot of human life, 50
Which poisoned body and soul, scarce drags the chain,
That lengthens as it goes and clanks behind.

Commerce has set the mark of selfishness,
The signet of its all-enslaving power
Upon a shining ore, and called it gold: 55
Before whose image bow the vulgar great,
The vainly rich, the miserable proud,
The mob of peasants, nobles, priests, and kings,
And with blind feelings reverence the power
That grinds them to the dust of misery. 60
But in the temple of their hireling hearts
Gold is a living god, and rules in scorn
All earthly things but virtue.

Since tyrants, by the sale of human life,
Heap luxuries to their sensualism, and fame 65
To their wide-wasting and insatiate pride,
Success has sanctioned to a credulous world
The ruin, the disgrace, the woe of war.
His hosts of blind and unresisting dupes
The despot numbers; from his cabinet 70
These puppets of his schemes he moves at will,
Even as the slaves by force or famine driven,
Beneath a vulgar master, to perform
A task of cold and brutal drudgery;—
Hardened to hope, insensible to fear, 75

Scarce living pullies of a dead machine,
Mere wheels of work and articles of trade,
That grace the proud and noisy pomp of wealth!

The harmony and happiness of man
Yields to the wealth of nations; that which lifts 80
His nature to the heaven of its pride,
Is bartered for the poison of his soul;
The weight that drags to earth his towering hopes,
Blighting all prospect but of selfish gain,
Withering all passion but of slavish fear, 85
Extinguishing all free and generous love
Of enterprize and daring, even the pulse
That fancy kindles in the beating heart
To mingle with sensation, it destroys,—
Leaves nothing but the sordid lust of self, 90
The groveling hope of interest and gold,
Unqualified, unmingled, unredeemed
Even by hypocrisy.

And statesmen boast
Of wealth! The wordy eloquence that lives
After the ruin of their hearts, can gild 95
The bitter poison of a nation's woe,
Can turn the worship of the servile mob
To their corrupt and glaring idol fame,
From virtue, trampled by its iron tread,
Although its dazzling pedestal be raised 100
Amid the horrors of a limb-strewn field,
With desolated dwellings smoking round.
The man of ease, who, by his warm fire-side,
To deeds of charitable intercourse
And bare fulfilment of the common laws 105
Of decency and prejudice, confines
The struggling nature of his human heart,
Is duped by their cold sophistry; he sheds
A passing tear perchance upon the wreck
Of earthly peace, when near his dwelling's door 110
The frightful waves are driven,—when his son
Is murdered by the tyrant, or religion
Drives his wife raving mad. But the poor man,

Whose life is misery, and fear, and care;
 Whom the morn wakens but to fruitless toil; 115
 Who ever hears his famished offspring's scream,
 Whom their pale mother's uncomplaining gaze
 For ever meets, and the proud rich man's eye
 Flashing command, and the heart-breaking scene
 Of thousands like himself;—he little heeds 120
 The rhetoric of tyranny; his hate
 Is quenchless as his wrongs; he laughs to scorn
 The vain and bitter mockery of words,
 Feeling the horror of the tyrant's deeds,
 And unrestrained but by the arm of power, 125
 That knows and dreads his enmity.

The iron rod of penury still compels
 Her wretched slave to bow the knee to wealth,
 And poison, with unprofitable toil,
 A life too void of solace to confirm 130
 The very chains that bind him to his doom.
 Nature, impartial in munificence,
 Has gifted man with all-subduing will.
 Matter, with all its transitory shapes,
 Lies subjected and plastic at his feet, 135
 That, weak from bondage, tremble as they tread.
 How many a rustic Milton has past by,
 Stifling the speechless longings of his heart,
 In unremitting drudgery and care!
 How many a vulgar Cato has compelled 140
 His energies, no longer tameless then,
 To mould a pin, or fabricate a nail!
 How many a Newton, to whose passive ken
 Those mighty spheres that gem infinity
 Were only specks of tinsel, fixed in heaven 145
 To light the midnights of his native town!

Yet every heart contains perfection's germ:
 The wisest of the sages of the earth,
 That ever from the stores of reason drew
 Science and truth, and virtue's dreadless tone, 150
 Were but a weak and inexperienced boy,

Proud, sensual, unimpassioned, unimbued
With pure desire and universal love,
Compared to that high being, of cloudless brain,
Untainted passion, elevated will, 155
Which death (who even would linger long in awe
Within his noble presence, and beneath
His changeless eyebeam,) might alone subdue.
Him, every slave now dragging through the filth
Of some corrupted city his sad life, 160
Pining with famine, swoln with luxury,
Blunting the keenness of his spiritual sense
With narrow schemings and unworthy cares,
Or madly rushing through all violent crime,
To move the deep stagnation of his soul,— 165
Might imitate and equal.

But mean lust
Has bound its chains so tight around the earth,
That all within it but the virtuous man
Is venal: gold or fame will surely reach
The price prefixed by selfishness, to all 170
But him of resolute and unchanging will;
Whom, nor the plaudits of a servile crowd,
Nor the vile joys of tainting luxury,
Can bribe to yield his elevated soul
To tyranny or falsehood, though they wield 175
With blood-red hand the sceptre of the world.

All things are sold: the very light of heaven
Is venal; earth's unsparing gifts of love,
The smallest and most despicable things
That lurk in the abysses of the deep, 180
All objects of our life, even life itself,
And the poor pittance which the laws allow
Of liberty, the fellowship of man,
Those duties which his heart of human love
Should urge him to perform instinctively, 185
Are bought and sold as in a public mart
Of undisguising selfishness, that sets
On each its price, the stamp-mark of her reign.
Even love is sold; the solace of all woe

Is turned to deadliest agony, old age 190
Shivers in selfish beauty's loathing arms,
And youth's corrupted impulses prepare
A life of horror from the blighting bane
Of commerce; whilst the pestilence that springs
From unenjoying sensualism, has filled 195
All human life with hydra-headed woes.
Falsehood demands but gold to pay the pangs
Of outraged conscience; for the slavish priest
Sets no great value on his hireling faith:
A little passing pomp, some servile souls, 200
Whom cowardice itself might safely chain,
Or the spare mite of avarice could bribe
To deck the triumph of their languid zeal,
Can make him minister to tyranny.
More daring crime requires a loftier meed: 205
Without a shudder, the slave-soldier lends
His arm to murderous deeds, and steels his heart,
When the dread eloquence of dying men,
Low mingling on the lonely field of fame,
Assails that nature, whose applause he sells 210
For the gross blessings of a patriot mob,
For the vile gratitude of heartless kings,
And for a cold world's good word,—viler still!

There is a nobler glory, which survives
Until our being fades, and, solacing 215
All human care, accompanies its change;
Deserts not virtue in the dungeon's gloom,
And, in the precincts of the palace, guides
Its footsteps through that labyrinth of crime;
Imbues his lineaments with dauntlessness, 220
Even when, from power's avenging hand, he takes
Its sweetest, last and noblest title—death;
—The consciousness of good, which neither gold,
Nor sordid fame, nor hope of heavenly bliss,
Can purchase; but a life of resolute good, 225
Unalterable will, quenchless desire
Of universal happiness, the heart
That beats with it in unison, the brain,

Whose ever wakeful wisdom toils to change
Reason's rich stores for its eternal weal, 230

This commerce of sincerest virtue needs
No mediative signs of selfishness,
No jealous intercourse of wretched gain,
No balancings of prudence, cold and long;
In just and equal measure all is weighed, 235
One scale contains the sum of human weal,
And one, the good man's heart.

How vainly seek
The selfish for that happiness denied
To aught but virtue! Blind and hardened, they,
Who hope for peace amid the storms of care, 240
Who covet power they know not how to use,
And sigh for pleasure they refuse to give,—
Madly they frustrate still their own designs;
And, where they hope that quiet to enjoy
Which virtue pictures, bitterness of soul, 245
Pining regrets, and vain repentances,
Disease, disgust, and lassitude, pervade
Their valueless and miserable lives.

But hoary-headed selfishness has felt
Its death-blow, and is tottering to the grave: 250
A brighter morn awaits the human day,
When every transfer of earth's natural gifts
Shall be a commerce of good words and works;
When poverty and wealth, the thirst of fame,
The fear of infamy, disease and woe, 255
War with its million horrors, and fierce hell
Shall live but in the memory of time,
Who, like a penitent libertine, shall start,
Look back, and shudder at his younger years.

VI.

ALL touch, all eye, all ear,
The Spirit felt the Fairy's burning speech.
O'er the thin texture of its frame,

The varying periods painted changing glows,
As on a summer even, 5
When soul-enfolding music floats around,
The stainless mirror of the lake
Re-images the eastern gloom,
Mingling convulsively its purple hues
With sunset's burnished gold. 10

Then thus the Spirit spoke:
It is a wild and miserable world!
Thorny, and full of care,
Which every fiend can make his prey at will.
O Fairy! in the lapse of years, 15
Is there no hope in store?
Will yon vast suns roll on
Interminably, still illuming
The night of so many wretched souls,
And see no hope for them? 20
Will not the universal Spirit e'er
Revivify this withered limb of Heaven?

The Fairy calmly smiled
In comfort, and a kindling gleam of hope
Suffused the Spirit's lineaments. 25
Oh! rest thee tranquil; chase those fearful doubts,
Which ne'er could rack an everlasting soul,
That sees the chains which bind it to its doom.
Yes! crime and misery are in yonder earth,
Falsehood, mistake, and lust; 30
But the eternal world
Contains at once the evil and the cure.
Some eminent in virtue shall start up,
Even in perversest time:
The truths of their pure lips, that never die, 35
Shall bind the scorpion falsehood with a wreath
Of ever-living flame,
Until the monster sting itself to death.

How sweet a scene will earth become!
Of purest spirits, a pure dwelling-place, 40

Symphonious with the planetary spheres;
When man, with changeless nature coalescing,
Will undertake regeneration's work,
When its ungenial poles no longer point
To the red and baleful sun 45
That faintly twinkles there.

Spirit! on yonder earth,
Falsehood now triumphs; deadly power
Has fixed its seal upon the lip of truth!
Madness and misery are there! 50
The happiest is most wretched! Yet confide,
Until pure health-drops, from the cup of joy,
Fall like a dew of balm upon the world.
Now, to the scene I shew, in silence turn,
And read the blood-stained charter of all woe, 55
Which nature soon, with recreating hand,
Will blot in mercy from the book of earth.
How bold the flight of passion's wandering wing,
How swift the step of reason's firmer tread,
How calm and sweet the victories of life, 60
How terrorless the triumph of the grave!
How powerless were the mightiest monarch's arm,
Vain his loud threat, and impotent his frown!
How ludicrous the priest's dogmatic roar!
The weight of his exterminating curse, 65
How light! and his affected charity,
To suit the pressure of the changing times,
What palpable deceit!—but for thy aid,
Religion! but for thee, prolific fiend,
Who peopled earth with demons, hell with men, 70
And heaven with slaves!

Thou taintest all thou lookest upon!—the stars,
Which on thy cradle beamed so brightly sweet,
Were gods to the distempered playfulness
Of thy untutored infancy: the trees, 75
The grass, the clouds, the mountains, and the sea,
All living things that walk, swim, creep, or fly,
Were gods: the sun had homage, and the moon

Her worshipper. Then thou becamest, a boy,
More daring in thy frenzies : every shape, 80
Monstrous or vast, or beautifully wild,
Which, from sensation's relics, fancy culls ;
The spirits of the air, the shuddering ghost,
The genii of the elements, the powers
That give a shape to nature's varied works, 85
Had life and place in the corrupt belief
Of thy blind heart : yet still thy youthful hands
Were pure of human blood. Then manhood gave
Its strength and ardour to thy frenzied brain ;
Thine eager gaze scanned the stupendous scene, 90
Whose wonders mocked the knowledge of thy pride :
Their everlasting and unchanging laws
Reproached thine ignorance. Awhile thou stoodst
Baffled and gloomy ; then thou didst sum up
The elements of all that thou didst know ; 95
The changing seasons, winter's leafless reign,
The budding of the heaven-breathing trees,
The eternal orbs that beautify the night,
The sun-rise, and the setting of the moon,
Earthquakes and wars, and poisons and disease, 100
And all their causes, to an abstract point,
Converging, thou didst bend and called it God !
The self-sufficing, the omnipotent,
The merciful, and the avenging God !
Who, prototype of human misrule, sits 105
High in heaven's realm, upon a golden throne,
Even like an earthly king ; and whose dread work,
Hell, gapes for ever for the unhappy slaves
Of fate, whom he created, in his sport,
To triumph in their torments when they fell ! 110
Earth heard the name ; earth trembled, as the smoke
Of his revenge ascended up to heaven,
Blotting the constellations ; and the cries
Of millions, butchered in sweet confidence
And unsuspecting peace, even when the bonds 115
Of safety were confirmed by wordy oaths
Sworn in his dreadful name, rung through the land ;
Whilst innocent babes writhed on thy stubborn spear,

And thou didst laugh to hear the mother's shriek
Of maniac gladness, as the sacred steel 120
Felt cold in her torn entrails!

Religion! thou wert then in manhood's prime:
But age crept on: one God would not suffice
For senile puerility; thou framedst
A tale to suit thy dotage, and to glut 125
Thy misery-thirsting soul, that the mad fiend
Thy wickedness had pictured, might afford
A plea for sating the unnatural thirst
For murder, rapine, violence, and crime,
That still consumed thy being, even when 130
Thou heardst the step of fate;—that flames might light
Thy funeral scene, and the shrill horrent shrieks
Of parents dying on the pile that burned
To light their children to thy paths, the roar
Of the encircling flames, the exulting cries 135
Of thine apostles, loud commingling there,
Might sate thine hungry ear
Even on the bed of death!

But now contempt is mocking thy grey hairs;
Thou art descending to the darksome grave, 140
Unhonoured and unpitied, but by those
Whose pride is passing by like thine, and sheds,
Like thine, a glare that fades before the sun
Of truth, and shines but in the dreadful night
That long has lowered above the ruined world. 145

Throughout these infinite orbs of mingling light,
Of which yon earth is one, is wide diffused
A spirit of activity and life,
That knows no term, cessation, or decay;
That fades not when the lamp of earthly life, 150
Extinguished in the dampness of the grave,
Awhile there slumbers, more than when the babe
In the dim newness of its being feels
The impulses of sublunary things,
And all is wonder to unpractised sense: 155
But, active, stedfast, and eternal, still

Guides the fierce whirlwind, in the tempest roars,
 Cheers in the day, breathes in the balmy groves,
 Strengthens in health, and poisons in disease;
 And in the storm of change, that ceaselessly 160
 Rolls round the eternal universe, and shakes
 Its undecaying battlement, presides,
 Apportioning with irresistible law
 The place each spring of its machine shall fill;
 So that when waves on waves tumultuous heap 165
 Confusion to the clouds, and fiercely driven
 Heaven's lightnings scorch the uprooted ocean-fords,
 Whilst, to the eye of shipwrecked mariner,
 Lone sitting on the bare and shuddering rock,
 All seems unlinked contingency and chance: 170
 No atom of this turbulence fulfils
 A vague and unnecessitated task,
 Or acts but as it must and ought to act.
 Even the minutest molecule of light,
 That in an April sunbeam's fleeting glow 175
 Fulfills its destined, though invisible work,
 The universal Spirit guides; nor less,
 When merciless ambition, or mad zeal,
 Has led two hosts of dupes to battle-field,
 That, blind, they there may dig each other's graves, 180
 And call the sad work glory, does it rule
 All passions: not a thought, a will, an act,
 No working of the tyrant's moody mind,
 Nor one misgiving of the slaves who boast
 Their servitude, to hide the shame they feel, 185
 Nor the events enchaining every will,
 That from the depths of unrecorded time
 Have drawn all-influencing virtue, pass
 Unrecognized, or unforeseen by thee,
 Soul of the Universe! eternal spring 190
 Of life and death, of happiness and woe,
 Of all that chequers the phantasmal scene
 That floats before our eyes in wavering light,
 Which gleams but on the darkness of our prison,
 Whose chains and massy walls 195
 We feel, but cannot see.

Spirit of Nature! all-sufficing Power,
 Necessity! thou mother of the world!
 Unlike the God of human error, thou
 Requirest no prayers or praises; the caprice 201
 Of man's weak will belongs no more to thee
 Than do the changeful passions of his breast
 To thy unvarying harmony: the slave,
 Whose horrible lusts spread misery o'er the world,
 And the good man, who lifts, with virtuous pride, 205
 His being, in the sight of happiness,
 That springs from his own works; the poison-tree,
 Beneath whose shade all life is withered up,
 And the fair oak, whose leafy dome affords
 A temple where the vows of happy love 210
 Are registered, are equal in thy sight:
 No love, no hate thou cherishest; revenge
 And favoritism, and worst desire of fame
 Thou knowest not: all that the wide world contains
 Are but thy passive instruments, and thou 215
 Regardst them all with an impartial eye,
 Whose joy or pain thy nature cannot feel,
 Because thou hast not human sense,
 Because thou art not human mind.

Yes! when the sweeping storm of time 220
 Has sung its death-dirge o'er the ruined fanes
 And broken altars of the almighty fiend,
 Whose name usurps thy honors, and the blood
 Through centuries clotted there, has floated down
 The tainted flood of ages, shalt thou live 225
 Unchangeable! A shrine is raised to thee,
 Which, nor the tempest breath of time,
 Nor the interminable flood,
 Over earth's slight pageant rolling,
 Availeth to destroy,— 230
 The sensitive extension of the world.
 That wonderous and eternal fane,
 Where pain and pleasure, good and evil join,
 To do the will of strong necessity,
 And life, in multitudinous shapes, 235

Still pressing forward where no term can be,
 Like hungry and unresting flame
 Curls round the eternal columns of its strength.

VII.

SPIRIT.

I WAS an infant when my mother went
 To see an atheist burned. She took me there:
 The dark-robed priests were met around the pile;
 The multitude was gazing silently;
 And as the culprit passed with dauntless mien, 5
 Tempered disdain in his unaltering eye,
 Mixed with a quiet smile, shone calmly forth:
 The thirsty fire crept round his manly limbs;
 His resolute eyes were scorched to blindness soon;
 His death-pang rent my heart! the insensate mob 10
 Uttered a cry of triumph, and I wept.
 Weep not, child! cried my mother, for that man
 Has said, There is no God.

FAIRY.

There is no God!
 Nature confirms the faith his death-groan sealed:
 Let heaven and earth, let man's revolving race, 15
 His ceaseless generations tell their tale;
 Let every part depending on the chain
 That links it to the whole, point to the hand
 That grasps its term! let every seed that falls
 In silent eloquence unfold its store 20
 Of argument: infinity within,
 Infinity without, belie creation;
 The exterminable spirit it contains
 Is nature's only God; but human pride
 Is skilful to invent most serious names 25
 To hide its ignorance.

The name of God
 Has fenced about all crime with holiness,
 Himself the creature of his worshippers,
 Whose names and attributes and passions change,
 Seeva, Buddh, Foh, Jehovah, God, or Lord, 30

Even with the human dupes who build his shrines,
Still serving o'er the war-polluted world
For desolation's watch-word; whether hosts
Stain his death-blushing chariot-wheels, as on
Triumphantly they roll, whilst Brahmins raise 35
A sacred hymn to mingle with the groans;
Or countless partners of his power divide
His tyranny to weakness; or the smoke
Of burning towns, the cries of female helplessness,
Unarmed old age, and youth, and infancy, 40
Horribly massacred, ascend to heaven
In honour of his name; or, last and worst,
Earth groans beneath religion's iron age,
And priests dare babble of a God of peace,
Even whilst their hands are red with guiltless blood, 45
Murdering the while, uprooting every germ
Of truth, exterminating, spoiling all,
Making the earth a slaughter-house!

O Spirit! through the sense
By which thy inner nature was apprised 50
Of outward shews, vague dreams have rolled,
And varied reminiscences have waked
Tablets that never fade;
All things have been imprinted there,
The stars, the sea, the earth, the sky, 55
Even the unshapeliest lineaments
Of wild and fleeting visions
Have left a record there
To testify of earth.

These are my empire, for to me is given 60
The wonders of the human world to keep,
And fancy's thin creations to endow
With manner, being, and reality;
Therefore a wondrous phantom, from the dreams
Of human error's dense and purblind faith, 65
I will evoke, to meet thy questioning.
Ahasuerus, rise!

A strange and woe-worn wight
 Arose beside the battlement,
 And stood unmoving there. 70
 His inessential figure cast no shade
 Upon the golden floor;
 His port and mien bore mark of many years,
 And chronicles of untold ancientness
 Were legible within his beamless eye: 75
 Yet his cheek bore the mark of youth;
 Freshness and vigor knit his manly frame;
 The wisdom of old age was mingled there
 With youth's primæval dauntlessness;
 And inexpressible woe, 80
 Chastened by fearless resignation, gave
 An awful grace to his all-speaking brow.

SPIRIT.

Is there a God?

AHASUERUS.

Is there a God!—aye, an almighty God,
 And vengeful as almighty! Once his voice 85
 Was heard on earth: earth shuddered at the sound;
 The fiery-visaged firmament expressed
 Abhorrence, and the grave of nature yawned
 To swallow all the dauntless and the good
 That dared to hurl defiance at his throne, 90
 Girt as it was with power. None but slaves
 Survived,—cold-blooded slaves, who did the work
 Of tyrannous omnipotence; whose souls
 No honest indignation ever urged
 To elevated daring, to one deed 95
 Which gross and sensual self did not pollute.
 These slaves built temples for the omnipotent fiend,
 Gorgeous and vast: the costly altars smoked
 With human blood, and hideous pæans rung
 Through all the long-drawn aisles. A murderer heard
 His voice in Egypt, one whose gifts and arts 101
 Had raised him to his eminence in power,
 Accomplice of omnipotence in crime,
 And confidant of the all-knowing one.
 These were Jehovah's words. 105

From an eternity of idleness
 I, God, awoke; in seven days' toil made earth
 From nothing; rested, and created man:
 I placed him in a paradise, and there
 Planted the tree of evil, so that he 110
 Might eat and perish, and my soul procure
 Wherewith to sate its malice, and to turn,
 Even like a heartless conqueror of the earth,
 All misery to my fame. The race of men
 Chosen to my honour, with impunity 115
 May sate the lusts I planted in their heart.
 Here I command thee hence to lead them on,
 Until, with hardened feet, their conquering troops
 Wade on the promised soil through woman's blood,
 And make my name be dreaded through the land. 120
 Yet ever burning flame and ceaseless woe
 Shall be the doom of their eternal souls,
 With every soul on this ungrateful earth,
 Virtuous or vicious, weak or strong,—even all
 Shall perish, to fulfill the blind revenge 125
 (Which you, to men, call justice) of their God.

The murderer's brow
 Quivered with horror.

God omnipotent,
 Is there no mercy? must our punishment
 Be endless? will long ages roll away, 130
 And see no term? Oh! wherefore hast thou made
 In mockery and wrath this evil earth?
 Mercy, becomes the powerful—be but just:
 O God! repent and save.

One way remains:
 I will beget a son, and he shall bear 135
 The sins of all the world; he shall arise
 In an unnoticed corner of the earth,
 And there shall die upon a cross, and purge
 The universal crime; so that the few
 On whom my grace descends, those who are marked
 As vessels to the honor of their God, 141
 May credit this strange sacrifice, and save

Their souls alive : millions shall live and die,
 Who ne'er shall call upon their Saviour's name,
 But, unredeemed, go to the gaping grave. 145
 Thousands shall deem it an old woman's tale,
 Such as the nurses frighten babes withal :
 These in a gulph of anguish and of flame
 Shall curse their reprobation endlessly,
 Yet tenfold pangs shall force them to avow, 150
 Even on their beds of torment, where they howl,
 My honor, and the justice of their doom.
 What then avail their virtuous deeds, their thoughts
 Of purity, with radiant genius bright,
 Or lit with human reason's earthly ray? 155
 Many are called, but few will I elect.
 Do thou my bidding, Moses !

Even the murderer's cheek
 Was blanched with horror, and his quivering lips
 Scarce faintly uttered—O almighty one,
 I tremble and obey ! 160

O Spirit ! centuries have set their seal
 On this heart of many wounds, and loaded brain,
 Since the Incarnate came : humbly he came,
 Veiling his horrible Godhead in the shape
 Of man, scorned by the world, his name unheard, 165
 Save by the rabble of his native town,
 Even as a parish demagogue. He led
 The crowd ; he taught them justice, truth, and peace,
 In semblance ; but he lit within their souls
 The quenchless flames of zeal, and blest the sword 170
 He brought on earth to satiate with the blood
 Of truth and freedom his malignant soul.
 At length his mortal frame was led to death.
 I stood beside him : on the torturing cross
 No pain assailed his unterrestrial sense ; 175
 And yet he groaned. Indignantly I summed
 The massacres and miseries which his name
 Had sanctioned in my country, and I cried,
 Go ! go ! in mockery.
 A smile of godlike malice reilluminated 180

His fading lineaments.—I go, he cried,
But thou shalt wander o'er the unquiet earth
Eternally.—The dampness of the grave
Bathed my imperishable front. I fell,
And long lay tranced upon the charmed soil. 185
When I awoke hell burned within my brain,
Which staggered on its seat; for all around
The mouldering relics of my kindred lay,
Even as the Almighty's ire arrested them,
And in their various attitudes of death 190
My murdered children's mute and eyeless skulls
Glared ghastly upon me.

But my soul,
From sight and sense of the polluting woe
Of tyranny, had long learned to prefer
Hell's freedom to the servitude of heaven. 195
Therefore I rose, and dauntlessly began.
My lonely and unending pilgrimage,
Resolved to wage unweariable war
With my almighty tyrant, and to hurl
Defiance at his impotence to harm 200
Beyond the curse I bore. The very hand
That barred my passage to the peaceful grave
Has crushed the earth to misery, and given
Its empire to the chosen of his slaves.
These have I seen, even from the earliest dawn 205
Of weak, unstable and precarious power;
Then preaching peace, as now they practise war,
So, when they turned but from the massacre
Of unoffending infidels, to quench
Their thirst for ruin in the very blood 210
That flowed in their own veins, and pityless zeal
Froze every human feeling, as the wife
Sheathed in her husband's heart the sacred steel,
Even whilst its hopes were dreaming of her love;
And friends to friends, brothers to brothers stood 215
Opposed in bloodiest battle-field, and war,
Scarce satiable by fate's last death-draught waged,
Drunk from the winepress of the Almighty's wrath;
Whilst the red cross, in mockery of peace,

Pointed to victory! When the fray was done, 220
No remnant of the exterminated faith
Survived to tell its ruin, but the flesh,
With putrid smoke poisoning the atmosphere,
That rotted on the half-extinguished pile.

Yes! I have seen God's worshippers unsheathe 225
The sword of his revenge, when grace descended,
Confirming all unnatural impulses,
To sanctify their desolating deeds;
And frantic priests waved the ill-omened cross
O'er the unhappy earth: then shone the sun 230
On showers of gore from the upflashing steel
Of safe assassination, and all crime
Made stingless by the spirits of the Lord,
And blood-red rainbows canopied the land.

Spirit! no year of my eventful being 235
Has passed unstained by crime and misery,
Which flows from God's own faith. I've marked his slaves
With tongues whose lies are venomous, beguile
The insensate mob, and, whilst one hand was red
With murder, feign to stretch the other out 240
For brotherhood and peace; and that they now
Babble of love and mercy, whilst their deeds
Are marked with all the narrowness and crime
That freedom's young arm dare not yet chastise,
Reason may claim our gratitude, who now 245
Establishing the imperishable throne
Of truth, and stubborn virtue, maketh vain
The unprevailing malice of my foe,
Whose bootless rage heaps torments for the brave,
Adds impotent eternities to pain, 250
Whilst keenest disappointment racks his breast
To see the smiles of peace around them play,
To frustrate or to sanctify their doom.

Thus have I stood,—through a wild waste of years 255
Struggling with whirlwinds of mad agony,
Yet peaceful, and serene, and self-enshrined,

Mocking my powerless tyrant's horrible curse
 With stubborn and unalterable will,
 Even as a giant oak, which heaven's fierce flame
 Had scathèd in the wilderness, to stand 260
 A monument of fadeless ruin there;
 Yet peacefully and movelessly it braves
 The midnight conflict of the wintry storm,
 As in the sun-light's calm it spreads
 Its worn and withered arms on high 265
 To meet the quiet of a summer's noon.

 The Fairy waved her wand :
 Ahasuerus fled
 Fast as the shapes of mingled shade and mist,
 That lurk in the glens of a twilight grove, 270
 Flee from the morning beam :
 The matter of which dreams are made
 Not more endowed with actual life
 Than this phantasmal portraiture
 Of wandering human thought. 275

VIII.

THE present and the past thou hast beheld :
 It was a desolate sight. Now, Spirit, learn
 The secrets of the future.—Time!
 Unfold the brooding pinion of thy gloom,
 Render thou up thy half-devoured babes, 5
 And from the cradles of eternity,
 Where millions lie lulled to their portioned sleep
 By the deep murmuring stream of passing things,
 Tear thou that gloomy shroud.—Spirit, behold
 Thy glorious destiny ! 10

 Joy to the Spirit came.
 Through the wide rent in Time's eternal veil,
 Hope was seen beaming through the mists of fear :
 Earth was no longer hell ;
 Love, freedom, health, had given 15
 Their ripeness to the manhood of its prime,

And all its pulses beat
 Symphonious to the planetary spheres :
 Then dulcet music swelled
 Concordant with the life-strings of the soul ; 20
 It throbbed in sweet and languid beatings there,
 Catching new life from transitory death,—
 Like the vague sighings of a wind at even,
 That wakes the wavelets of the slumbering sea
 And dies on the creation of its breath, 25
 And sinks and rises, fails and swells by fits :
 Was the pure stream of feeling
 That sprung from these sweet notes,
 And o'er the Spirit's human sympathies
 With mild and gentle motion calmly flowed. 30

Joy to the Spirit came,—
 Such joy as when a lover sees
 The chosen of his soul in happiness,
 And witnesses her peace
 Whose woe to him were bitterer than death, 35
 Sees her unfaded cheek
 Glow mantling in first luxury of health,
 Thrills with her lovely eyes,
 Which like two stars amid the heaving main
 Sparkle through liquid bliss. 40

Then in her triumph spoke the Fairy Queen :
 I will not call the ghost of ages gone
 To unfold the frightful secrets of its lore ;
 The present now is past,
 And those events that desolate the earth 45
 Have faded from the memory of Time,
 Who dares not give reality to that
 Whose being I annul. To me is given
 The wonders of the human world to keep,
 Space, matter, time, and mind. Futurity 50
 Exposes now its treasure ; let the sight
 Renew and strengthen all thy failing hope.
 O human Spirit ! spur thee to the goal
 Where virtue fixes universal peace,

And midst the ebb and flow of human things, 55
Shew somewhat stable, somewhat certain still,
A lighthouse o'er the wild of dreary waves.

The habitable earth is full of bliss;
Those wastes of frozen billows that were hurled
By everlasting snow-storms round the poles, 60
Where matter dared not vegetate or live,
But ceaseless frost round the vast solitude
Bound its broad zone of stillness, are unloosed;
And fragrant zephyrs there from spicy isles
Ruffle the placid ocean-deep, that rolls 65
Its broad, bright surges to the sloping sand,
Whose roar is wakened into echoings sweet
To murmur through the heaven-breathing groves
And melodize with man's blest nature there.

Those deserts of immeasurable sand, 70
Whose age-collected fervors scarce allowed
A bird to live, a blade of grass to spring,
Where the shrill chirp of the green lizard's love
Broke on the sultry silentness alone,
Now teem with countless rills and shady woods, 75
Corn-fields and pastures and white cottages;
And where the startled wilderness beheld
A savage conqueror stained in kindred blood,
A tigress sating with the flesh of lambs,
The unnatural famine of her toothless cubs, 80
Whilst shouts and howlings through the desert rang,
Sloping and smooth the daisy-spangled lawn,
Offering sweet incense to the sun-rise, smiles
To see a babe before his mother's door,
Sharing his morning's meal 85
With the green and golden basilisk
That comes to lick his feet.

Those trackless deeps, where many a weary sail
Has seen above the illimitable plain,
Morning on night, and night on morning rise, 90
Whilst still no land to greet the wanderer spread

Its shadowy mountains on the sun-bright sea,
 Where the loud roarings of the tempest-waves
 So long have mingled with the gusty wind
 In melancholy loneliness, and swept 95
 The desert of those ocean solitudes,
 But vocal to the sea-bird's harrowing shriek,
 The bellowing monster, and the rushing storm,
 Now to the sweet and many-mingling sounds
 Of kindest human impulses respond. 100
 Those lonely realms bright garden-isles begem,
 With lightsome clouds and shining seas between,
 And fertile vallies, resonant with bliss,
 Whilst green woods overcanopy the wave,
 Which like a toil-worn labourer leaps to shore, 105
 To meet the kisses of the flowrets there.

All things are recreated, and the flame
 Of consentaneous love inspires all life:
 The fertile bosom of the earth gives suck
 To myriads, who still grow beneath her care, 110
 Rewarding her with their pure perfectness:
 The balmy breathings of the wind inhale
 Her virtues, and diffuse them all abroad:
 Health floats amid the gentle atmosphere,
 Glows in the fruits, and mantles on the stream: 115
 No storms deform the beaming brow of heaven,
 Nor scatter in the freshness of its pride
 The foliage of the ever verdant trees;
 But fruits are ever ripe, flowers ever fair,
 And autumn proudly bears her matron grace, 120
 Kindling a flush on the fair cheek of spring,
 Whose virgin bloom beneath the ruddy fruit
 Reflects its tint and blushes into love.

The lion now forgets to thirst for blood:
 There might you see him sporting in the sun 125
 Beside the dreadless kid; his claws are sheathed,
 His teeth are harmless, custom's force has made
 His nature as the nature of a lamb.
 Like passion's fruit, the nightshade's tempting bane

Poisons no more the pleasure it bestows: 180
All bitterness is past; the cup of joy
Unmingled mantles to the goblet's brim,
And courts the thirsty lips it fled before.

But chief, ambiguous man, he that can know
More misery, and dream more joy than all; 185
Whose keen sensations thrill within his breast
To mingle with a loftier instinct there,
Lending their power to pleasure and to pain,
Yet raising, sharpening, and refining each;
Who stands amid the ever-varying world, 140
The burthen or the glory of the earth;
He chief perceives the change, his being notes
The gradual renovation, and defines
Each movement of its progress on his mind.

Man, where the gloom of the long polar night 145
Lowers o'er the snow-clad rocks and frozen soil,
Where scarce the hardiest herb that braves the frost
Basks in the moonlight's ineffectual glow,
Shrank with the plants, and darkened with the night;
His chilled and narrow energies, his heart, 150
Insensible to courage, truth, or love,
His stunted stature and imbecile frame,
Marked him for some abortion of the earth,
Fit compeer of the bears that roamed around,
Whose habits and enjoyments were his own: 155
His life a feverish dream of stagnant woe,
Whose meagre wants but scantily fulfilled,
Apprised him ever of the joyless length
Which his short being's wretchedness had reached;
His death a pang which famine, cold and toil 160
Long on the mind, whilst yet the vital spark
Clung to the body stubbornly, had brought:
All was inflicted here that earth's revenge
Could wreak on the infringers of her law;
One curse alone was spared—the name of God. 165

Nor where the tropics bound the realms of day
With a broad belt of mingling cloud and flame,

Where blue mists through the unmoving atmosphere
Scattered the seeds of pestilence, and fed
Unnatural vegetation, where the land 170
Teemed with all earthquake, tempest and disease,
Was man a nobler being; slavery
Had crushed him to his country's bloodstained dust;
Or he was bartered for the fame of power,
Which all internal impulses destroying, 175
Makes human will an article of trade;
Or he was changed with Christians for their gold,
And dragged to distant isles, where to the sound
Of the flesh-mangling scourge, he does the work
Of all-polluting luxury and wealth, 180
Which doubly visits on the tyrants' heads
The long-protracted fulness of their woe;
Or he was led to legal butchery,
To turn to worms beneath that burning sun,
Where kings first leagued against the rights of men,
And priests first traded with the name of God. 185

Even where the milder zone afforded man
A seeming shelter, yet contagion there,
Blighting his being with unnumbered ills,
Spread like a quenchless fire; nor truth till late 190
Availed to arrest its progress, or create
That peace which first in bloodless victory waved
Her snowy standard o'er this favoured clime:
There man was long the train-bearer of slaves,
The mimic of surrounding misery, 195
The jackal of ambition's lion-rage,
The bloodhound of religion's hungry zeal.

Here now the human being stands adorning
This loveliest earth with taintless body and mind;
Blest from his birth with all bland impulses, 200
Which gently in his noble bosom wake
All kindly passions and all pure desires.
Him, still from hope to hope the bliss pursuing,
Which from the exhaustless lore of human weal 204
Draws on the virtuous mind, the thoughts that rise

In time-destroying infiniteness, gift
 With self-enshrined eternity, that mocks
 The unprevailing hoariness of age,
 And man, once fleeting o'er the transient scene
 Swift as an unremembered vision, stands 210
 Immortal upon earth: no longer now
 He slays the lamb that looks him in the face,
 And horribly devours his mangled flesh,
 Which still avenging nature's broken law,
 Kindled all putrid humours in his frame, 215
 All evil passions, and all vain belief,
 Hatred, despair, and loathing in his mind,
 The germs of misery, death, disease, and crime.
 No longer now the wingèd habitants,
 That in the woods their sweet lives sing away, 220
 Flee from the form of man; but gather round,
 And prune their sunny feathers on the hands
 Which little children stretch in friendly sport
 Towards these dreadless partners of their play.
 All things are void of terror: man has lost 225
 His terrible prerogative, and stands
 An equal amidst equals: happiness
 And science dawn though late upon the earth;
 Peace cheers the mind, health renovates the frame;
 Disease and pleasure cease to mingle here, 230
 Reason and passion cease to combat there;
 Whilst each unfettered o'er the earth extend
 Their all-subduing energies, and wield
 The sceptre of a vast dominion there;
 Whilst every shape and mode of matter lends 235
 Its force to the omnipotence of mind,
 Which from its dark mine drags the gem of truth
 To decorate its paradise of peace.

IX.

O HAPPY Earth! reality of Heaven!
 To which those restless souls that ceaselessly
 Throng through the human universe, aspire;
 Thou consummation of all mortal hope!

Thou glorious prize of blindly-working will! 5
Whose rays, diffused throughout all space and time,
Verge to one point and blend for ever there:
Of purest spirits thou pure dwelling-place!
Where care and sorrow, impotence and crime,
Languor, disease, and ignorance dare not come: 10
O happy Earth, reality of Heaven!

Genius has seen thee in her passionate dreams,
And dim forebodings of thy loveliness
Haunting the human heart, have there entwined
Those rooted hopes of some sweet place of bliss 15
Where friends and lovers meet to part no more.
Thou art the end of all desire and will,
The product of all action; and the souls
That by the paths of an aspiring change
Have reached thy haven of perpetual peace, 20
There rest from the eternity of toil
That framed the fabric of thy perfectness.

Even Time, the conqueror, fled thee in his fear;
That hoary giant, who, in lonely pride,
So long had ruled the world, that nations fell 25
Beneath his silent footstep. Pyramids,
That for millenniums had withstood the tide
Of human things, his storm-breath drove in sand
Across that desert where their stones survived
The name of him whose pride had heaped them there. 30
Yon monarch, in his solitary pomp,
Was but the mushroom of a summer day,
That his light-winged footstep pressed to dust:
Time was the king of earth: all things gave way
Before him, but the fixed and virtuous will, 35
The sacred sympathies of soul and sense,
That mocked his fury and prepared his fall.

Yet slow and gradual dawned the morn of love;
Long lay the clouds of darkness o'er the scene,
Till from its native heaven they rolled away: 40
First, crime triumphant o'er all hope careered

Unblushing, undisguising, bold and strong;
Whilst falsehood, tricked in virtue's attributes,
Long sanctified all deeds of vice and woe,
Till done by her own venomous sting to death, 45
She left the moral world without a law,
No longer fettering passion's fearless wing,
Nor searing reason with the brand of God.
Then steadily the happy ferment worked;
Reason was free; and wild though passion went 50
Through tangled glens and wood-embosomed meads,
Gathering a garland of the strangest flowers,
Yet like the bee returning to her queen,
She bound the sweetest on her sister's brow,
Who meek and sober kissed the sportive child, 55
No longer trembling at the broken rod.

Mild was the slow necessity of death:
The tranquil spirit failed beneath its grasp,
Without a groan, almost without a fear,
Calm as a voyager to some distant land, 60
And full of wonder, full of hope as he.
The deadly germs of languor and disease
Died in the human frame, and purity
Blest with all gifts her earthly worshippers.
How vigorous then the athletic form of age! 65
How clear its open and unwrinkled brow!
Where neither avarice, cunning, pride, or care,
Had stamped the seal of grey deformity
On all the mingling lineaments of time.
How lovely the intrepid front of youth! 70
Which meek-eyed courage decked with freshest grace;
Courage of soul, that dreaded not a name,
And elevated will, that journeyed on
Through life's phantasmal scene in fearlessness,
With virtue, love, and pleasure, hand in hand. 75

Then, that sweet bondage which is freedom's self,
And rivets with sensation's softest tie
The kindred sympathies of human souls,
Needed no fetters of tyrannic law:

Those delicate and timid impulses 80
In nature's primal modesty arose,
And with undoubted confidence disclosed
The growing longings of its dawning love,
Unchecked by dull and selfish chastity,
That virtue of the cheaply virtuous, 85
Who pride themselves in senselessness and frost.
No longer prostitution's venom'd bane
Poisoned the springs of happiness and life;
Woman and man, in confidence and love,
Equal and free and pure together trod 90
The mountain-paths of virtue, which no more
Were stained with blood from many a pilgrim's feet.

Then, where, through distant ages, long in pride
The palace of the monarch-slave had mocked
Famine's faint groan, and penury's silent tear, 95
A heap of crumbling ruins stood, and threw
Year after year their stones upon the field,
Wakening a lonely echo; and the leaves
Of the old thorn, that on the topmost tower
Usurped the royal ensign's grandeur, shook 100
In the stern storm that swayed the topmost tower
And whispered strange tales in the whirlwind's ear.

Low through the lone cathedral's roofless aisles
The melancholy winds a death-dirge sung:
It were a sight of awfulness to see 105
The works of faith and slavery, so vast,
So sumptuous, yet so perishing withal!
Even as the corpse that rests beneath its wall.
A thousand mourners deck the pomp of death
To-day, the breathing marble glows above 110
To decorate its memory, and tongues
Are busy of its life: to-morrow, worms
In silence and in darkness seize their prey.

Within the massy prison's mouldering courts,
Fearless and free the ruddy children played, 115
Weaving gay chaplets for their innocent brows

With the green ivy and the red wall-flower,
That mock the dungeon's unavailing gloom;
The ponderous chains, and gratings of strong iron,
There rusted amid heaps of broken stone 120
That mingled slowly with their native earth:
There the broad beam of day, which feebly once
Lighted the cheek of lean captivity
With a pale and sickly glare, then freely shone
On the pure smiles of infant playfulness: 125
No more the shuddering voice of hoarse despair
Pealed through the echoing vaults, but soothing notes
Of ivy-fingered winds and gladsome birds
And merriment were resonant around.

These ruins soon left not a wreck behind: 130
Their elements, wide scattered o'er the globe,
To happier shapes were moulded, and became
Ministrant to all blissful impulses:
Thus human things were perfected, and earth,
Even as a child beneath its mother's love, 135
Was strengthened in all excellence, and grew
Fairer and nobler with each passing year.

Now Time his dusky pennons o'er the scene
Closes in stedfast darkness, and the past
Fades from our charmed sight. My task is done: 140
Thy lore is learned. Earth's wonders are thine own,
With all the fear and all the hope they bring.
My spells are past: the present now recurs.
Ah me! a pathless wilderness remains
Yet unsubdued by man's reclaiming hand. 145
Yet, human Spirit, bravely hold thy course,
Let virtue teach thee firmly to pursue
The gradual paths of an aspiring change:
For birth and life and death, and that strange state
Before the naked soul has found its home, 150
All tend to perfect happiness, and urge
The restless wheels of being on their way,
Whose flashing spokes, instinct with infinite life,
Bicker and burn to gain their destined goal:

For birth but wakes the spirit to the sense 155
 Of outward shews, whose unexperienced shape
 New modes of passion to its frame may lend;
 Life is its state of action, and the store
 Of all events is aggregated there
 That variegate the eternal universe; 160
 Death is a gate of dreariness and gloom,
 That leads to azure isles and beaming skies
 And happy regions of eternal hope.
 Therefore, O Spirit! fearlessly bear on:
 Though storms may break the primrose on its stalk, 165
 Though frosts may blight the freshness of its bloom,
 Yet spring's awakening breath will woo the earth,
 To feed with kindest dews its favorite flower,
 That blooms in mossy banks and darksome glens,
 Lighting the green wood with its sunny smile. 170

Fear not then, Spirit, death's disrobing hand,
 So welcome when the tyrant is awake,
 So welcome when the bigot's hell-torch burns;
 'Tis but the voyage of a darksome hour,
 The transient gulph-dream of a startling sleep. 175
 Death is no foe to virtue: earth has seen
 Love's brightest roses on the scaffold bloom,
 Mingling with freedom's fadeless laurels there,
 And presaging the truth of visioned bliss.
 Are there not hopes within thee, which this scene 180
 Of linked and gradual being has confirmed?
 Whose stings bade thy heart look further still,
 When to the moonlight walk by Henry led,
 Sweetly and sadly thou didst talk of death?
 And wilt thou rudely tear them from thy breast, 185
 Listening supinely to a bigot's creed,
 Or tamely crouching to the tyrant's rod,
 Whose iron thongs are red with human gore?
 Never: but bravely bearing on, thy will
 Is destined an eternal war to wage 190
 With tyranny and falsehood, and uproot
 The germs of misery from the human heart.
 Thine is the hand whose piety would soothe

The thorny pillow of unhappy crime,
Whose impotence an easy pardon gains, 195
Watching its wanderings as a friend's disease:
Thine is the brow whose mildness would defy
Its fiercest rage, and brave its sternest will,
When fenced by power and master of the world.
Thou art sincere and good; of resolute mind, 205
Free from heart-withering custom's cold control,
Of passion lofty, pure and unsubdued.
Earth's pride and meanness could not vanquish thee,
And therefore art thou worthy of the boon
Which thou hast now received: virtue shall keep 205
Thy footsteps in the path that thou hast trod,
And many days of beaming hope shall bless
Thy spotless life of sweet and sacred love.
Go, happy one, and give that bosom joy
Whose sleepless spirit waits to catch 210
Light, life and rapture from thy smile.

The Fairy waves her wand of charm.
Speechless with bliss the Spirit mounts the car,
That rolled beside the battlement,
Bending her beamy eyes in thankfulness. 215
Again the enchanted steeds were yoked,
Again the burning wheels inflame
The steep descent of heaven's untrodden way.
Fast and far the chariot flew:
The vast and fiery globes that rolled 225
Around the Fairy's palace-gate
Lessened by slow degrees and soon appeared
Such tiny twinklers as the planet orbs
That there attendant on the solar power
With borrowed light pursued their narrower way. 225

Earth floated then below:
The chariot paused a moment there;
The Spirit then descended:
The restless coursers pawed the ungenial soil,
Snuffed the gross air, and then, their errand done, 230
Unfurled their pinions to the winds of heaven.

The Body and the Soul united then,
 A gentle start convulsed Ianthe's frame:
 Her veiny eyelids quietly unclosed;
 Moveless awhile the dark blue orbs remained: 235
 She looked around in wonder and beheld
 Henry, who kneeled in silence by her couch,
 Watching her sleep with looks of speechless love,
 And the bright beaming stars
 That through the casement shone. 240

NOTES.

I.—PAGE 437.

The sun's unclouded orb
 Rolled through the black concave.

BEYOND our atmosphere the sun would appear a rayless orb of fire in the midst of a black concave. The equal diffusion of its light on earth is owing to the refraction of the rays by the atmosphere, and their reflection from other bodies. Light consists either of vibrations propagated through a subtle medium, or of numerous minute particles repelled in all directions from the luminous body. Its velocity greatly exceeds that of any substance with which we are acquainted: observations on the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites have demonstrated that light takes up no more than 8' 7" in passing from the sun to the earth, a distance of 95,000,000 miles.—Some idea may be gained of the immense distance of the fixed stars, when it is computed that many years would elapse before light could reach this earth from the nearest of them; yet in one year light travels 5,422,400,000,000 miles, which is a distance 5,707,600 times greater than that of the sun from the earth.

I.—PAGE 438.

Whilst round the chariot's way
Innumerable systems rolled.

The plurality of worlds,—the indefinite immensity of the universe is a most awful subject of contemplation. He who rightly feels its mystery and grandeur, is in no danger of seduction from the falsehoods of religious systems, or of deifying the principle of the universe. It is impossible to believe that the Spirit that pervades this infinite machine, begat a son upon the body of a Jewish woman; or is angered at the consequences of that necessity, which is a synonym of itself. All that miserable tale of the Devil and Eve, and an Intercessor, with the childish mummeries of the God of the Jews, is irreconcilable with the knowledge of the stars. The works of his fingers have borne witness against him.

The nearest of the fixed stars is inconceivably distant from the earth, and they are probably proportionably distant from each other. By a calculation of the velocity of light, Sirius is supposed to be at least 54,224,000,000,000 miles from the earth.¹ That which appears only like a thin and silvery cloud streaking the heaven, is in effect composed of innumerable clusters of suns, each shining with its own light, and illuminating numbers of planets that revolve around them. Millions and millions of suns are ranged around us, all attended by innumerable worlds, yet calm, regular, and harmonious, all keeping the paths of immutable necessity.

IV.—PAGE 456.

These are the hired bravos who defend
The tyrant's throne.

To employ murder as a means of justice, is an idea which a man of an enlightened mind will not dwell upon with pleasure. To march forth in rank and file, and all the pomp of streamers and trumpets, for the purpose of shooting at

¹ See Nicholson's Encyclopedia, art. Light.

our fellow-men as a mark; to inflict upon them all the variety of wound and anguish; to leave them weltering in their blood; to wander over the field of desolation, and count the number of the dying and the dead,—are employments which in thesis we may maintain to be necessary, but which no good man will contemplate with gratulation and delight. A battle we suppose is won:—thus truth is established, thus the cause of justice is confirmed! It surely requires no common sagacity to discern the connection between this immense heap of calamities and the assertion of truth or the maintenance of justice.

Kings, and ministers of state, the real authors of the calamity, sit unmolested in their cabinet, while those against whom the fury of the storm is directed are, for the most part, persons who have been trepanned into the service, or who are dragged unwillingly from their peaceful homes into the field of battle. A soldier is a man whose business it is to kill those who never offended him, and who are the innocent martyrs of other men's iniquities. Whatever may become of the abstract question of the justifiableness of war, it seems impossible that the soldier should not be a depraved and unnatural being.

To these more serious and momentous considerations it may be proper to add a recollection of the ridiculousness of the military character. Its first constituent is obedience: a soldier is, of all descriptions of men, the most completely a machine; yet his profession inevitably teaches him something of dogmatism, swaggering, and self-consequence: he is like the puppet of a showman, who, at the very time he is made to strut and swell and display the most farcical airs, we perfectly know cannot assume the most insignificant gesture, advance either to the right or the left, but as he is moved by his exhibitor.—*Godwin's Enquirer, Essay v.*

I will here subjoin a little poem, so strongly expressive of my abhorrence of despotism and falsehood, that I fear lest it never again may be depicted so vividly. This opportunity is perhaps the only one that ever will occur of rescuing it from oblivion.

FALSEHOOD AND VICE:

A DIALOGUE.

WHILST monarchs laughed upon their thrones
 To hear a famished nation's groans,
 And hugged the wealth wrung from the woe
 That makes its eyes and veins o'erflow,—
 Those thrones, high built upon the heaps 5
 Of bones where frenzied famine sleeps,
 Where slavery wields her scourge of iron,
 Red with mankind's unheeded gore,
 And war's mad fiends the scene environ, 10
 Mingling with shrieks a drunken roar,
 There Vice and Falsehood took their stand,
 High raised above the unhappy land.

FALSEHOOD.

Brother! arise from the dainty fare,
 Which thousands have toiled and bled to bestow
 A finer feast for thy hungry ear 15
 Is the news that I bring of human woe.

VICE.

And, secret one, what hast thou done,
 To compare, in thy tumid pride, with me?
 I, whose career, through the blasted year,
 Has been tracked by despair and agony. 20

FALSEHOOD.

What have I done!—I have torn the robe
 From baby truth's unsheltered form,
 And round the desolated globe
 Borne safely the bewildering charm:
 My tyrant-slaves to a dungeon-floor 25
 Have bound the fearless innocent,
 And streams of fertilizing gore
 Flow from her bosom's hideous rent,
 Which this unfailing dagger gave....
 I dread that blood!—no more—this day 30
 Is ours, though her eternal ray
 Must shine upon our grave.
 Yet know, proud Vice, had I not given

To thee the robe I stole from heaven,
 Thy shape of ugliness and fear 35
 Had never gained admission here.

VICE.

And know, that had I disdained to toil,
 But sate in my loathsome cave the while,
 And ne'er to these hateful sons of heaven,
 GOLD, MONARCHY, and MURDER, given; 40
 Hadst thou with all thine art essayed
 One of thy games then to have played,
 With all thine overweening boast,
 Falsehood! I tell thee thou hadst lost!—
 Yet wherefore this dispute?—we tend, 45
 Fraternal, to one common end;
 In this cold grave beneath my feet,
 Will our hopes, our fears, and our labours, meet.

FALSEHOOD.

I brought my daughter, RELIGION, on earth:
 She smothered Reason's babes in their birth; 50
 But dreaded their mother's eye severe,—
 So the crocodile slunk off slily in fear,
 And loosed her bloodhounds from the den....
 They started from dreams of slaughtered men,
 And, by the light of her poison eye, 55
 Did her work o'er the wide earth frightfully:
 The dreadful stench of her torches' flare,
 Fed with human fat, polluted the air:
 The curses, the shrieks, the ceaseless cries
 Of the many-mingling miseries, 60
 As on she trod, ascended high
 And trumpeted my victory!—
 Brother, tell what thou hast done.

VICE.

I have extinguished the noon-day sun,
 In the carnage-smoke of battles won: 65
 Famine, murder, hell and power
 Were glutted in that glorious hour
 Which searchless fate had stamped for me
 With the seal of her security.....
 For the bloated wretch on yonder throne 70

Commanded the bloody fray to rise.
 Like me he joyed at the stifled moan
 Wrung from a nation's miseries;
 While the snakes, whose slime even him *defiled*,
 In ecstasies of malice smiled: 75
 They thought 'twas theirs,—but mine the deed!
 Theirs is the toil, but mine the meed—
 Ten thousand victims madly bleed.
 They dream that tyrants goad them there
 With poisonous war to taint the air: 80
 These tyrants, on their beds of thorn,
 Swell with the thoughts of murderous fame,
 And with their gains to lift my name
 Restless they plan from night to morn:
 I—I do all; without my aid 85
 Thy daughter, that relentless maid,
 Could never o'er a death-bed urge
 The fury of her venom'd scourge.

FALSEHOOD.

Brother, well:—the world is ours;
 And whether thou or I have won, 90
 The pestilence expectant lours
 On all beneath yon blasted sun.
 Our joys, our toils, our honors meet
 In the milk-white and wormy winding-sheet:
 A short-lived hope, unceasing care, 95
 Some heartless scraps of godly prayer,
 A moody curse, and a frenzied sleep
 Ere gapes the grave's unclosing deep,
 A tyrant's dream, a coward's start,
 The ice that clings to a priestly heart, 100
 A judge's frown, a courtier's smile,
 Make the great whole for which we toil;
 And, brother, whether thou or I
 Have done the work of misery,
 It little boots: thy toil and pain, 105
 Without my aid, were more than vain;
 And but for thee I ne'er had sate
 The guardian of heaven's palace gate.



V.—PAGE 459.

Thus do the generations of the earth
Go to the grave and issue from the womb.

One generation passeth away and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth for ever. The sun also ariseth and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south and turneth about unto the north, it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; unto the place whence the rivers come, thither shall they return again.

Ecclesiastes, chap. i.

V.—PAGE 459.

Even as the leaves
Which the keen frost-wind of the waning year
Has scattered on the forest soil.

Οἷη περὶ φύλλων γενεή, τοιήδε καὶ ἀνδρῶν.
Φύλλα τὰ μὲν τ' ἀνεμος χαμάδις χέει, ἄλλα δέ θ' ὕλη
Τηλεθόωσα φύει, ἔαρος δ' ἐπιγίγνεται ὥρη.
Ὡς ἀνδρῶν γενεή, ἣ μὲν φύει, ἣ δ' ἀπολήγει.

ΙΑΙΑΔ. Ζ'. l. 146.

V.—PAGE 460.

The mob of peasants, nobles, priests, and kings.

Suave mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis
E terrâ magnum alterius spectare laborem;
Non quia vexari quemquam 'st jucunda voluptas,
Sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suave 'st.
Suave etiam belli certamina magna tueri,
Per campos instructa, tua sine parte pericli;
Sed nil dulcius est bene quam munita tenere
Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena;
Despicere unde queas alios, passim que videre

Errare atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ;
 Certare ingenio; contendere nobilitate;
 Nocteis atque dies niti præstante labore
 Ad summas emergere opes, rerum que potiri.
 O miseras hominum menteis! O pectora cæca!

Luc. lib. ii.

V.—PAGE 461.

And statesmen boast
 Of wealth!

There is no real wealth but the labour of man. Were the mountains of gold and the vallies of silver, the world would not be one grain of corn the richer; no one comfort would be added to the human race. In consequence of our consideration for the precious metals, one man is enabled to heap to himself luxuries at the expence of the necessaries of his neighbour; a system admirably fitted to produce all the varieties of disease and crime, which never fail to characterize the two extremes of opulence and penury. A speculator takes pride to himself as the promoter of his country's prosperity, who employs a number of hands in the manufacture of articles avowedly destitute of use, or subservient only to the unhallowed cravings of luxury and ostentation. The nobleman, who employs the peasants of his neighbourhood in building his palaces, until "*jam parca aratro jugera, regis moles relinquant*," flatters himself that he has gained the title of a patriot by yielding to the impulses of vanity. The shew and pomp of courts adduce the same apology for its continuance; and many a fête has been given, many a woman has eclipsed her beauty by her dress, to benefit the labouring poor and to encourage trade. Who does not see that this is a remedy which aggravates, whilst it palliates the countless diseases of society? The poor are set to labour,—for what? Not the food for which they famish: not the blankets for want of which their babes are frozen by the cold of their miserable hovels: not those comforts of civilization without which civilized man is far more miserable than the

meanest savage; oppressed as he is by all its insidious evils, within the daily and taunting prospect of its innumerable benefits assiduously exhibited before him:—no; for the pride of power, for the miserable isolation of pride, for the false pleasures of the hundredth part of society. No greater evidence is afforded of the wide extended and radical mistakes of civilized man than this fact: those arts which are essential to his very being are held in the greatest contempt; employments are lucrative in an inverse ratio to their usefulness¹: the jeweller, the toyman, the actor gains fame and wealth by the exercise of his useless and ridiculous art; whilst the cultivator of the earth, he without whom society must cease to subsist, struggles through contempt and penury, and perishes by that famine which, but for his unceasing exertions, would annihilate the rest of mankind.

I will not insult common sense by insisting on the doctrine of the natural equality of man. The question is not concerning its desirableness, but its practicability: so far as it is practicable, it is desirable. That state of human society which approaches nearer to an equal partition of its benefits and evils should, *cæteris paribus*, be preferred: but so long as we conceive that a wanton expenditure of human labour, not for the necessities, not even for the luxuries of the mass of society, but for the egotism and ostentation of a few of its members, is defensible on the ground of public justice, so long we neglect to approximate to the redemption of the human race.

Labour is required for physical, and leisure for moral improvement: from the former of these advantages the rich, and from the latter the poor, by the inevitable conditions of their respective situations, are precluded. A state which should combine the advantages of both, would be subjected to the evils of neither. He that is deficient in firm health, or vigorous intellect, is but half a man: hence it follows, that, to subject the labouring classes to unnecessary labour, is wantonly depriving them of any

¹ See Rousseau, "De l'Inégalité parmi les Hommes," note 7.

opportunities of intellectual improvement; and that the rich are heaping up for their own mischief the disease, lassitude and ennui by which their existence is rendered an intolerable burthen.

English reformers exclaim against sinecures,—but the true pension list is the rent-roll of the landed proprietors: wealth is a power usurped by the few, to compel the many to labour for their benefit. The laws which support this system derive their force from the ignorance and credulity of its victims: they are the result of a conspiracy of the few against the many, who are themselves obliged to purchase this pre-eminence by the loss of all real comfort.



The commodities that substantially contribute to the subsistence of the human species form a very short catalogue: they demand from us but a slender portion of industry. If these only were produced, and sufficiently produced, the species of man would be continued. If the labour necessarily required to produce them were equitably divided among the poor, and, still more, if it were equitably divided among all, each man's share of labour would be light, and his portion of leisure would be ample. There was a time when this leisure would have been of small comparative value: it is to be hoped that the time will come, when it will be applied to the most important purposes. Those hours which are not required for the production of the necessaries of life, may be devoted to the cultivation of the understanding, the enlarging our stock of knowledge, the refining our taste, and thus opening to us new and more exquisite sources of enjoyment.

* * * * *

It was perhaps necessary that a period of monopoly and oppression should subsist, before a period of cultivated equality could subsist. Savages perhaps would never have been excited to the discovery of truth and the invention of art, but by the narrow motives which such a period affords. But surely, after the savage state has ceased, and men have set out in the glorious career of discovery and invention, monopoly and oppression cannot be necessary to

prevent them from returning to a state of barbarism.—*Godwin's Enquirer, Essay II. See also Pol. Jus., book VIII. chap. II.*

It is a calculation of this admirable author, that all the conveniences of civilized life might be produced, if society would divide the labour equally among its members, by each individual being employed in labour two hours during the day.

V.—PAGE 461.

or religion
Drives his wife raving mad.

I am acquainted with a lady of considerable accomplishments, and the mother of a numerous family, whom the Christian religion has goaded to incurable insanity. A parallel case is, I believe, within the experience of every physician.

Nam jam sæpe homines patriam, carosque parentes
Prodiderunt, vitare Acherusia templa petentes.

Lucretius.

V.—PAGE 463.

Even love is sold.

Not even the intercourse of the sexes is exempt from the despotism of positive institution. Law pretends even to govern the indisciplinable wanderings of passion, to put fetters on the clearest deductions of reason, and, by appeals to the will, to subdue the involuntary affections of our nature. Love is inevitably consequent upon the perception of loveliness. Love withers under constraint: its very essence is liberty: it is compatible neither with obedience, jealousy, nor fear: it is there most pure, perfect, and unlimited, where its votaries live in confidence, equality, and unreserve.

How long then ought the sexual connection to last? what law ought to specify the extent of the grievances which should limit its duration? A husband and wife

ought to continue so long united as they love each other: any law which should bind them to cohabitation for one moment after the decay of their affection, would be a most intolerable tyranny, and the most unworthy of toleration. How odious an usurpation of the right of private judgment should that law be considered, which should make the ties of friendship indissoluble, in spite of the caprices, the inconstancy, the fallibility, and capacity for improvement of the human mind. And by so much would the fetters of love be heavier and more unendurable than those of friendship, as love is more vehement and capricious, more dependent on those delicate peculiarities of imagination, and less capable of reduction to the ostensible merits of the object.

The state of society in which we exist is a mixture of feudal savageness and imperfect civilization. The narrow and unenlightened morality of the Christian religion is an aggravation of these evils. It is not even until lately that mankind have admitted that happiness is the sole end of the science of ethics, as of all other sciences; and that the fanatical idea of mortifying the flesh for the love of God has been discarded. I have heard, indeed, an ignorant collegian adduce, in favour of Christianity, its hostility to every worldly feeling!¹

But if happiness be the object of morality, of all human unions and disunions; if the worthiness of every action is to be estimated by the quantity of pleasurable sensation it is calculated to produce, then the connection of the sexes is so long sacred as it contributes to the comfort of the parties, and is naturally dissolved when its evils are greater than its benefits. There is nothing immoral in this separation. Constancy has nothing virtuous in itself, independently of the pleasure it confers, and partakes of

¹ The first Christian emperor made a law by which seduction was punished with death: if the female pleaded her own consent, she also was punished with death; if the parents endeavoured to screen the criminals, they were banished and their estates were confiscated; the slaves who might be accessory were burned alive, or forced to swallow melted lead. The very offspring of an illegal love were involved in the consequences of the sentence.—*Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, &c. vol. ii., page 210. See also, for the hatred of the primitive Christians to love and even marriage, page 269.

the temporizing spirit of vice in proportion as it endures tamely moral defects of magnitude in the object of its indiscreet choice. Love is free: to promise for ever to love the same woman, is not less absurd than to promise to believe the same creed: such a vow, in both cases, excludes us from all enquiry. The language of the votarist is this: The woman I now love may be infinitely inferior to many others; the creed I now profess may be a mass of errors and absurdities; but I exclude myself from all future information as to the amiability of the one and the truth of the other, resolving blindly, and in spite of conviction, to adhere to them. Is this the language of delicacy and reason? Is the love of such a frigid heart of more worth than its belief?

The present system of constraint does no more, in the majority of instances, than make hypocrites or open enemies. Persons of delicacy and virtue, unhappily united to one whom they find it impossible to love, spend the loveliest season of their life in unproductive efforts to appear otherwise than they are, for the sake of the feelings of their partner or the welfare of their mutual offspring: those of less generosity and refinement openly avow their disappointment, and linger out the remnant of that union, which only death can dissolve, in a state of incurable bickering and hostility. The early education of their children takes its colour from the squabbles of the parents; they are nursed in a systematic school of ill humour, violence, and falsehood. Had they been suffered to part at the moment when indifference rendered their union irksome, they would have been spared many years of misery: they would have connected themselves more suitably, and would have found that happiness in the society of more congenial partners which is for ever denied them by the despotism of marriage. They would have been separately useful and happy members of society, who, whilst united, were miserable and rendered misanthropical by misery. The conviction that wedlock is indissoluble holds out the strongest of all temptations to the perverse: they indulge without restraint in acrimony, and all the little tyrannies of domestic life, when they

know that their victim is without appeal. If this connection were put on a rational basis, each would be assured that habitual ill temper would terminate in separation, and would check this vicious and dangerous propensity.

Prostitution is the legitimate offspring of marriage and its accompanying errors. Women, for no other crime than having followed the dictates of a natural appetite, are driven with fury from the comforts and sympathies of society. It is less venial than murder; and the punishment which is inflicted on her who destroys her child to escape reproach, is lighter than the life of agony and disease to which the prostitute is irrecoverably doomed. Has a woman obeyed the impulse of unerring nature;—society declares war against her, pitiless and eternal war: she must be the tame slave, she must make no reprisals; theirs is the right of persecution, hers the duty of endurance. She lives a life of infamy: the loud and bitter laugh of scorn scares her from all return. She dies of long and lingering disease: yet *she* is in fault, *she* is the criminal, *she* the froward and untameable child,—and society, forsooth, the pure and virtuous matron, who casts her as an abortion from her undefiled bosom! Society avenges herself on the criminals of her own creation; she is employed in anathematizing the vice to-day, which yesterday she was the most zealous to teach. Thus is formed one tenth of the population of London: meanwhile the evil is twofold. Young men, excluded by the fanatical idea of chastity from the society of modest and accomplished women, associate with these vicious and miserable beings, destroying thereby all those exquisite and delicate sensibilities whose existence cold-hearted worldlings have denied; annihilating all genuine passion, and debasing that to a selfish feeling which is the excess of generosity and devotedness. Their body and mind alike crumble into a hideous wreck of humanity; idiotcy and disease become perpetuated in their miserable offspring, and distant generations suffer for the bigotted morality of their forefathers. Chastity is a monkish and evangelical superstition, a greater foe to natural temperance even than unintellectual sensuality; it strikes at

the root of all domestic happiness, and consigns more than half of the human race to misery, that some few may monopolize according to law. A system could not well have been devised more studiously hostile to human happiness than marriage.

I conceive that, from the abolition of marriage, the fit and natural arrangement of sexual connection would result. I by no means assert that the intercourse would be promiscuous: on the contrary; it appears, from the relation of parent to child, that this union is generally of long duration, and marked above all others with generosity and self-devotion. But this is a subject which it is perhaps premature to discuss. That which will result from the abolition of marriage, will be natural and right; because choice and change will be exempted from restraint.

In fact, religion and morality, as they now stand, compose a practical code of misery and servitude: the genius of human happiness must tear every leaf from the accursed book of God, ere man can read the inscription on his heart. How would morality, dressed up in stiff stays and finery, start from her own disgusting image, should she look in the mirror of nature!



VI.—PAGE 467.

To the red and baleful sun
That faintly twinkles there.

The north polar star, to which the axis of the earth, in its present state of obliquity, points. It is exceedingly probable, from many considerations, that this obliquity will gradually diminish, until the equator coincides with the ecliptic: the nights and days will then become equal on the earth throughout the year, and probably the seasons also. There is no great extravagance in presuming that the progress of the perpendicularity of the poles may be as rapid as the progress of intellect; or that there should be a perfect identity between the moral and

physical improvement of the human species. It is certain that wisdom is not compatible with disease, and that, in the present state of the climates of the earth, health, in the true and comprehensive sense of the word, is out of the reach of civilized man. Astronomy teaches us that the earth is now in its progress, and that the poles are every year becoming more and more perpendicular to the ecliptic. The strong evidence afforded by the history of mythology, and geological researches, that some event of this nature has taken place already, affords a strong presumption that this progress is not merely an oscillation, as has been surmised by some late astronomers.¹ Bones of animals peculiar to the torrid zone have been found in the north of Siberia, and on the banks of the river Ohio. Plants have been found in the fossil state in the interior of Germany, which demand the present climate of Hindostan for their production.² The researches of M. Bailly³ establish the existence of a people who inhabited a tract in Tartary 49° north latitude, of greater antiquity than either the Indians, the Chinese, or the Chaldeans, from whom these nations derived their sciences and theology. We find, from the testimony of antient writers, that Britain, Germany and France were much colder than at present, and that their great rivers were annually frozen over. Astronomy teaches us also, that since this period the obliquity of the earth's position has been considerably diminished.



VI.—PAGE 470.

No atom of this turbulence fulfils
A vague and unnecessitated task,
Or acts but as it must and ought to act.

Deux exemples serviront à nous rendre plus sensible le principe qui vient d'être posé; nous emprunterons l'une

¹ Laplace, *Système du Monde*.

² Cabanis, *Rapports du Physique et du Moral de l'Homme*, vol. ii. page 406.

³ *Lettres sur les Sciences*, à Voltaire. Bailly.

du physique et l'autre du moral. Dans un tourbillon de poussière qu'éleve un vent impetueux, quelque confus qu'il paroisse à nos yeux ; dans la plus affreuse tempête excité par des vents opposés qui soulèvent les flots, il n'y a pas une seule molécule de poussière ou d'eau qui soit placé au *hasard*, qui n'ait sa cause suffisante pour occuper le lieu où elle se trouve, et qui n'agisse rigoureusement de la manière dont elle doit agir. Une géomètre qui connoîtroit exactement les différentes forces qui agissent dans ces deux cas, et les propriétés des molécules qui sont mues, démontreroit que d'après des causes donnés, chaque molécule agit précisément comme elle doit agir, et ne peut agir autrement qu'elle ne fait.

Dans les convulsions terribles qui agitent quelquefois les sociétés politiques, et qui produisent souvent le renversement d'un empire, il n'y a pas une seule action, une seule parole, une seule pensée, une seule volonté, une seule passion dans les agens qui concourent à la révolution comme destructeurs ou comme victimes, qui ne soit nécessaire, qui n'agisse comme elle doit agir, qui n'opère infalliblement les effets qu'elle doit opérer, suivant la place qu'occupent ces agens dans ce tourbillon moral. Cela paroîtroit évident pour une intelligence qui sera en état de saisir et d'apprécier toutes les actions et reactions des esprits et des corps de ceux qui contribuent à cette révolution. *Système de la Nature*, vol. i. page 44.

VI.—PAGE 471.

Necessity, thou mother of the world !

He who asserts the doctrine of Necessity, means that, contemplating the events which compose the moral and material universe, he beholds only an immense and uninterrupted chain of causes and effects, no one of which could occupy any other place than it does occupy, or acts in any other place than it does act. The idea of necessity is obtained by our experience of the connection between objects, the uniformity of the operations of nature, the

constant conjunction of similar events, and the consequent inference of one from the other. Mankind are therefore agreed in the admission of necessity, if they admit that these two circumstances take place in voluntary action. Motive is, to voluntary action in the human mind, what cause is to effect in the material universe. The word liberty, as applied to mind, is analogous to the word chance as applied to matter: they spring from an ignorance of the certainty of the conjunction of antecedents and consequents.

Every human being is irresistibly impelled to act precisely as he does act: in the eternity which preceded his birth a chain of causes was generated, which, operating under the name of motives, make it impossible that any thought of his mind, or any action of his life, should be otherwise than it is. Were the doctrine of Necessity false, the human mind would no longer be a legitimate object of science; from like causes it would be in vain that we should expect like effects; the strongest motive would no longer be paramount over the conduct; all knowledge would be vague and undeterminate; we could not predict with any certainty that we might not meet as an enemy tomorrow him with whom we have parted in friendship tonight; the most probable inducements and the clearest reasonings would lose the invariable influence they possess. The contrary of this is demonstrably the fact. Similar circumstances produce the same unvariable effects. The precise character and motives of any man on any occasion being given, the moral philosopher could predict his actions with as much certainty as the natural philosopher could predict the effects of the mixture of any particular chemical substances. Why is the aged husbandman more experienced than the young beginner? Because there is a uniform, undeniable necessity in the operations of the material universe. Why is the old statesman more skilful than the raw politician? Because, relying on the necessary conjunction of motive and action, he proceeds to produce moral effects, by the application of those moral causes which experience has shown to be effectual. Some actions may be found to which we can attach no motives, but

these are the effects of causes with which we are unacquainted. Hence the relation which motive bears to voluntary action is that of cause to effect; nor, placed in this point of view, is it, or ever has it been the subject of popular or philosophical dispute. None but the few fanatics who are engaged in the herculean task of reconciling the justice of their God with the misery of man, will longer outrage common sense by the supposition of an event without a cause, a voluntary action without a motive. History, politics, morals, criticism, all grounds of reasonings, all principles of science, alike assume the truth of the doctrine of Necessity. No farmer carrying his corn to market doubts the sale of it at the market price. The master of a manufactory no more doubts that he can purchase the human labour necessary for his purposes, than that his machinery will act as they have been accustomed to act.

But, whilst none have scrupled to admit necessity as influencing matter, many have disputed its dominion over mind. Independently of its militating with the received ideas of the justice of God, it is by no means obvious to a superficial enquiry. When the mind observes its own operations, it feels no connection of motive and action: but as we know "nothing more of causation than the constant conjunction of objects and the consequent inference of one from the other, as we find that these two circumstances are universally allowed to have place in voluntary action, we may be easily led to own that they are subjected to the necessity common to all causes." The actions of the will have a regular conjunction with circumstances and characters; motive is, to voluntary action, what cause is to effect. But the only idea we can form of causation is a constant conjunction of similar objects, and the consequent inference of one from the other: wherever this is the case necessity is clearly established.

The idea of liberty, applied metaphorically to the will, has sprung from a misconception of the meaning of the word power. What is power?—*id quod potest*, that which can produce any given effect. To deny power, is to say that nothing can or has the power to be or act. In the

only true sense of the word power, it applies with equal force to the loadstone as to the human will. Do you think these motives, which I shall present, are powerful enough to rouse him? is a question just as common as, Do you think this lever has the power of raising this weight? The advocates of free-will assert that the will has the power of refusing to be determined by the strongest motive: but the strongest motive is that which, overcoming all others, ultimately prevails; this assertion therefore amounts to a denial of the will being ultimately determined by that motive which does determine it, which is absurd. But it is equally certain that a man cannot resist the strongest motive, as that he cannot overcome a physical impossibility.

The doctrine of Necessity tends to introduce a great change into the established notions of morality, and utterly to destroy religion. Reward and punishment must be considered, by the Necessarian, merely as motives which he would employ in order to procure the adoption or abandonment of any given line of conduct. Desert, in the present sense of the word, would no longer have any meaning; and he, who should inflict pain upon another for no better reason than that he deserved it, would only gratify his revenge under pretence of satisfying justice. It is not enough, says the advocate of free-will, that a criminal should be prevented from a repetition of his crime: he should feel pain, and his torments, when justly inflicted, ought precisely to be proportioned to his fault. But utility is morality; that which is incapable of producing happiness is useless; and though the crime of Damians must be condemned, yet the frightful torments which revenge, under the name of justice, inflicted on this unhappy man, cannot be supposed to have augmented, even at the long run, the stock of pleasurable sensation in the world. At the same time, the doctrine of Necessity does not in the least diminish our disapprobation of vice. The conviction which all feel, that a viper is a poisonous animal, and that a tiger is constrained, by the inevitable condition of his existence, to devour men, does not induce us to avoid them less sedulously, or, even more, to hesitate in

destroying them: but he would surely be of a hard heart, who, meeting with a serpent on a desert island, or in a situation where it was incapable of injury, should wantonly deprive it of existence. A Necessarian is inconsequent to his own principles, if he indulges in hatred or contempt; the compassion which he feels for the criminal is unmixed with a desire of injuring him: he looks with an elevated and dreadless composure upon the links of the universal chain as they pass before his eyes; whilst cowardice, curiosity and inconsistency only assail him in proportion to the feebleness and indistinctness with which he has perceived and rejected the delusions of free-will.

Religion is the perception of the relation in which we stand to the principle of the universe. But if the principle of the universe be not an organic being; the model and prototype of man, the relation between it and human beings are absolutely none. Without some insight into its will respecting our actions, religion is nugatory and vain. But will is only a mode of animal mind; moral qualities also are such as only a human being can possess; to attribute them to the principle of the universe, is to annex to it properties incompatible with any possible definition of its nature. It is probable that the word God was originally only an expression denoting the unknown cause of the known events which men perceived in the universe. By the vulgar mistake of a metaphor for a real being, of a word for a thing, it became a man, endowed with human qualities and governing the universe as an earthly monarch governs his kingdom. Their addresses to this imaginary being, indeed, are much in the same style as those of subjects to a king. They acknowledge his benevolence, deprecate his anger, and supplicate his favour.

But the doctrine of Necessity teaches us, that in no case could any event have happened otherwise than it did happen, and that, if God is the author of good, he is also the author of evil; that, if he is entitled to our gratitude for the one, he is entitled to our hatred for the other; that, admitting the existence of this hypothetic being, he is also subjected to the dominion of an immutable necessity. It is plain that the same arguments which prove that God

is the author of food, light, and life, prove him also to be the author of poison, darkness, and death. The wide-wasting earthquake, the storm, the battle, and the tyranny, are attributable to this hypothetic being in the same degree as the fairest forms of nature, sunshine, liberty, and peace.

But we are taught, by the doctrine of Necessity, that there is neither good nor evil in the universe, otherwise than as the events to which we apply these epithets have relation to our own peculiar mode of being. Still less than with the hypothesis of a God, will the doctrine of Necessity accord with the belief of a future state of punishment. God made man such as he is, and then damned him for being so: for to say that God was the author of all good, and man the author of all evil, is to say that one man made a straight line and a crooked one, and another man made the incongruity.



A Mahometan story, much to the present purpose, is recorded, wherein Adam and Moses are introduced disputing before God in the following manner. Thou, says Moses, art Adam, whom God created, and animated with the breath of life, and caused to be worshipped by the angels, and placed in Paradise, from whence mankind have been expelled for thy fault. Whereto Adam answered, Thou art Moses, whom God chose for his apostle, and entrusted with his word, by giving thee the tables of the law, and whom he vouchsafed to admit to discourse with himself. How many years dost thou find the law was written before I was created? Says Moses, Forty. And dost thou not find, replied Adam, these words therein, And Adam rebelled against his Lord and transgressed? Which Moses confessing, Dost thou therefore blame me, continued he, for doing that which God wrote of me that I should do, forty years before I was created, nay, for what was decreed concerning me fifty thousand years before the creation of heaven and earth?—*Sale's Prelim. Disc. to the Koran*, page 164.

VII.—PAGE 472.

There is no God!

This negation must be understood solely to affect a creative Deity. The hypothesis of a pervading Spirit coeternal with the universe, remains unshaken.

A close examination of the validity of the proofs adduced to support any proposition, is the only secure way of attaining truth, on the advantages of which it is unnecessary to descant: our knowledge of the existence of a Deity is a subject of such importance, that it cannot be too minutely investigated; in consequence of this conviction we proceed briefly and impartially to examine the proofs which have been adduced. It is necessary first to consider the nature of belief.

When a proposition is offered to the mind, it perceives the agreement or disagreement of the ideas of which it is composed. A perception of their agreement is termed *belief*. Many obstacles frequently prevent this perception from being immediate; these the mind attempts to remove in order that the perception may be distinct. The mind is active in the investigation, in order to perfect the state of perception of the relation which the component ideas of the proposition bear to each, which is passive: the investigation being confused with the perception, has induced many falsely to imagine that the mind is active in belief,—that belief is an act of volition,—in consequence of which it may be regulated by the mind. Pursuing, continuing this mistake, they have attached a degree of criminality to disbelief; of which, in its nature, it is incapable: it is equally incapable of merit.

Belief, then, is a passion, the strength of which, like every other passion, is in precise proportion to the degrees of excitement.

The degrees of excitement are three.

The senses are the sources of all knowledge to the mind; consequently their evidence claims the strongest assent.

The decision of the mind, founded upon our own

experience, derived from these sources, claims the next degree.

The experience of others, which addresses itself to the former one, occupies the lowest degree.

(A graduated scale, on which should be marked the capabilities of propositions to approach to the test of the senses, would be a just barometer of the belief which ought to be attached to them.)

Consequently no testimony can be admitted which is contrary to reason; reason is founded on the evidence of our senses.

Every proof may be referred to one of these three divisions: it is to be considered what arguments we receive from each of them, which should convince us of the existence of a Deity.

1st. The evidence of the senses. If the Deity should appear to us, if he should convince our senses of his existence, this revelation would necessarily command belief. Those to whom the Deity has thus appeared have the strongest possible conviction of his existence. But the God of Theologians is incapable of local visibility.

2d. Reason. It is urged that man knows that whatever is, must either have had a beginning, or have existed from all eternity: he also knows, that whatever is not eternal must have had a cause. When this reasoning is applied to the universe, it is necessary to prove that it was created: until that is clearly demonstrated, we may reasonably suppose that it has endured from all eternity. We must prove design before we can infer a designer. The only idea which we can form of causation is derivable from the constant conjunction of objects, and the consequent inference of one from the other. In a case where two propositions are diametrically opposite, the mind believes that which is least incomprehensible;—it is easier to suppose that the universe has existed from all eternity, than to conceive a being beyond its limits capable of creating it: if the mind sinks beneath the weight of one, is it an alleviation to increase the intolerability of the burthen?

The other argument, which is founded on a man's

knowledge of his own existence, stands thus. A man knows not only that he now is, but that once he was not; consequently there must have been a cause. But our idea of causation is alone derivable from the constant conjunction of objects and the consequent inference of one from the other; and, reasoning experimentally, we can only infer from effects, causes exactly adequate to those effects. But there certainly is a generative power which is effected by certain instruments: we cannot prove that it is inherent in these instruments; nor is the contrary hypothesis capable of demonstration: we admit that the generative power is incomprehensible; but to suppose that the same effect is produced by an eternal, omniscient, omnipotent being, leaves the cause in the same obscurity, but renders it more incomprehensible.

3d. Testimony. It is required that testimony should not be contrary to reason. The testimony that the Deity convinces the senses of men of his existence can only be admitted by us, if our mind considers it less probable that these men should have been deceived, than that the Deity should have appeared to them. Our reason can never admit the testimony of men, who not only declare that they were eye-witnesses of miracles, but that the Deity was irrational; for he commanded that he should be believed, he proposed the highest rewards for faith, eternal punishments for disbelief. We can only command voluntary actions; belief is not an act of volition; the mind is even passive, or involuntarily active; from this it is evident that we have no sufficient testimony, or rather that testimony is insufficient to prove the being of a God. It has been before shown that it cannot be deduced from reason. They alone, then, who have been convinced by the evidence of the senses, can believe it.

Hence it is evident that, having no proofs from either of the three sources of conviction, the mind *cannot* believe the existence of a creative God: it is also evident, that, as belief is a passion of the mind, no degree of criminality is attachable to disbelief; and that they

only are reprehensible who neglect to remove the false medium through which their mind views any subject of discussion. Every reflecting mind must acknowledge that there is no proof of the existence of a Deity.

God is an hypothesis, and, as such, stands in need of proof: the *onus probandi* rests on the theist. Sir Isaac Newton says: *Hypotheses non fingo, quicquid enim ex phaenomenis non deducitur, hypothesis vocanda est, et hypothesis vel metaphysicæ, vel physicæ, vel qualitatum occultarum, seu mechanicæ, in philosophiâ locum non habent.* To all proofs of the existence of a creative God apply this valuable rule. We see a variety of bodies possessing a variety of powers: we merely know their effects; we are in a state of ignorance with respect to their essences and causes. These Newton calls the phenomena of things; but the pride of philosophy is unwilling to admit its ignorance of their causes. From the phenomena, which are the objects of our senses, we attempt to infer a cause, which we call God, and gratuitously endow it with all negative and contradictory qualities. From this hypothesis we invent this general name, to conceal our ignorance of causes and essences. The being called God by no means answers with the conditions prescribed by Newton; it bears every mark of a veil woven by philosophical conceit, to hide the ignorance of philosophers even from themselves. They borrow the threads of its texture from the anthropomorphism of the vulgar. Words have been used by sophists for the same purposes, from the occult qualities of the peripatetics to the *effluvium* of Boyle and the *crinities* or *nebulæ* of Herschel. God is represented as infinite, eternal, incomprehensible; he is contained under every prædicate in non that the logic of ignorance could fabricate. Even his worshippers allow that it is impossible to form any idea of him: they exclaim with the French poet,

Pour dire ce qu'il est, il faut être lui-même.



Lord Bacon says, that "atheism leaves to man reason, philosophy, natural piety, laws, reputation, and every thing that can serve to conduct him to virtue; but superstition destroys all these, and erects itself into a tyranny over the understandings of men: hence atheism never disturbs the government, but renders man more clear-sighted, since he sees nothing beyond the boundaries of the present life." *Bacon's Moral Essays.*

La première théologie de l'homme lui fit d'abord craindre et adorer les élémens même, des objets matériels et grossiers; il rendit ensuite ses hommages à des agens présidens aux élémens, à des génies inférieurs, à des héros, ou à des hommes doués de grands qualités. A force de réfléchir il crut simplifier les choses en soumettant la nature entière à un seul agent, à un esprit, à une âme universelle, qui mettoit cette nature et ses parties en mouvement. En remontant des causes en causes, les mortels ont fini par ne rien voir; et c'est dans cette obscurité qu'ils ont placé leur Dieu; c'est dans cette abîme ténébreux que leur imagination inquiète travaille toujours à se fabriquer des chimères, que les affligeront jusqu'à ce que la connoissance de la nature les détrompe des phantômes qu'ils ont toujours si vainement adorés.

Si nous voulons nous rendre compte de nos idées sur la Divinité, nous serons obligés de convenir que, par le mot *Dieu*, les hommes n'ont jamais pu désigner que la cause la plus cachée, la plus éloignée, la plus inconnue des effets qu'ils voyoient: ils ne font usage de ce mot, que lorsque le jeu des causes naturelles et connues cesse d'être visible pour eux; dès qu'ils perdent le fil de ces causes, ou dès que leur esprit ne peut plus en suivre la chaîne, ils tranchent leur difficulté, et terminent leur recherches en appelant Dieu la dernière des causes, c'est-à-dire celle qui est au-delà de toutes les causes qu'ils connoissent; ainsi ils ne font qu'assigner une dénomination vague à une cause ignorée, à laquelle leur paresse ou les bornes de leurs connoissances les forcent de s'arrêter. Toutes les fois qu'on nous dit que Dieu est l'auteur de

quelque phénomène, cela signifie qu'on ignore comment un tel phénomène a pu s'opérer par le secours des forces ou des causes que nous connoissons dans la nature. C'est ainsi que le commun des hommes, dont l'ignorance est la partage, attribue à la Divinité non seulement les effets inusités que les frappent, mais encore les événemens les plus simples, dont les causes sont les plus faciles à connoître pour quiconque a pu les méditer. En un mot, l'homme a toujours respecté les causes inconnues des effets surprenans, que son ignorance l'empêchoit de démêler. Ce fut sur les debus de la nature que les hommes élevèrent le colosse imaginaire de la Divinité.

Si l'ignorance de la nature donna la naissance aux dieux, la connoissance de la nature est faite pour les détruire. A mesure que l'homme s'instruit, ses forces et ses ressources augmentent avec ses lumières; les sciences, les arts conservateurs, l'industrie, lui fournissent des secours; l'expérience le rassûre ou lui procure des moyens de résister aux efforts de biens des causes qui cessent de l'alarmer dès qu'il les a connues. En un mot, ses terreurs se dissipent dans la même proportion que son esprit s'éclaire. L'homme instruit cesse d'être superstitieux.

Ce n'est jamais que sur parole que des peuples entiers adorent le Dieu de leurs pères et de leurs prêtres: l'autorité, la confiance, la soumission, et l'habitude leur tiennent lieu de conviction et de preuves; ils se prosternent et prient, parce que leurs pères leur ont appris à se prosterner et prier: mais pourquoi ceux-ci se sont-ils mis à genoux? C'est que dans les temps éloignés leurs législateurs et leurs guides leur en ont fait un devoir. "Adorez et croyez," ont-ils dit, "des dieux que vous ne pouvez comprendre; rapportez-vous en à notre sagesse profonde; nous en savons plus que vous sur la divinité." Mais pourquoi m'en rapporterai-je à vous? C'est que Dieu le veut ainsi, c'est que Dieu vous punira si vous osez résister. Mais ce Dieu n'est-il donc pas la chose en question? Cependant les hommes se sont toujours payés de ce cercle vicieux; la paresse de leur esprit leur fit trouver plus court de s'en rapporter au jugement des autres,

Toutes les notions religieuses sont fondées uniquement sur l'autorité; toutes les religions du monde défendent l'examen et ne veulent pas que l'on raisonne; c'est l'autorité qui veut qu'on croie en Dieu; ce Dieu n'est lui-même fondé que sur l'autorité de quelques hommes qui prétendent le connoître, et venir de sa part pour l'annoncer à la terre. Un Dieu fait par les hommes, a sans doutes besoin des hommes pour se faire connoître aux hommes.

Ne seroit-ce donc que pour des prêtres des inspirés, des metaphysiciens que seroit réservée la conviction de l'existence d'un Dieu, que l'on dit néanmoins si nécessaire à tout le genre-humain? Mais trouvons-nous de l'harmonie entre les opinions théologiques des différens inspirés, ou des penseurs repandus sur la terre? Ceux même que font profession d'adorer le même Dieu, sont-ils d'accord sur son compte? Sont-ils contents des preuves que leurs collègues apportent de son existence? Souscrivent-ils unanimement aux idées qu'ils présentent sur sa nature, sur sa conduite, sur la façon d'entendre ses prétendus oracles? Est-il une contrée sur la terre, où la science de Dieu se soit réellement perfectionnée? A-t-elle pris quelque part la consistance et l'uniformité que nous voyons prendre aux connoissances humaines, aux arts les plus futiles, aux métiers les plus méprisés? des mots *d'esprit d'immatérialité*, de *création*, de *prédestination*, de *grace*; cette foule de distinctions subtiles dont la théologie s'est partout remplie dans quelques pays, ces inventions si ingénieuses, imaginées par des penseurs que se sont succédés depuis tant de siècles, n'ont fait, hélas! qu'embrouiller les choses, et jamais la science la plus nécessaire aux hommes n'a jusqu'ici pu acquérir la moindre fixité. Depuis des milliers d'années, ces rêveurs oisifs se sont perpétuellement relayés pour méditer la Divinité, pour deviner ses voies cachées, pour inventer des hypothèses propres à développer cette énigme importante. Leur peu de succès n'a point découragé la vanité théologique; toujours on a parlé de Dieu: on s'est égorgé pour lui, et cet être sublime demeure toujours le plus ignoré et le plus discuté.

Les hommes auroient été trop heureux, si, se bornant aux objets visibles qui les intéressent, ils eussent employé à perfectionner leurs sciences réelles, leurs loix, leur morale, leur éducation, la moitié des efforts qu'ils ont mis dans leurs recherches sur la Divinité. Ils auroient été bien plus sages encore, et plus fortunés, s'ils eussent pu consentir à laisser leurs guides désœuvrés se quereller entre eux, et sonder des profondeurs capables de les étourdir, sans se mêler de leurs disputes insensées. Mais il est de l'essence de l'ignorance d'attacher de l'importance à ce qu'elle ne comprend pas. La vanité humaine fait que l'esprit se roidit contre des difficultés. Plus un objet se derobe à nos yeux, plus nous faisons d'efforts pour le saisir, parce que dès-lors il aiguillonne notre orgueil, il excite notre curiosité, il nous paroît intéressant. En combattant pour son Dieu chacun ne combattit en effet que pour les intérêts de sa propre vanité, qui de toutes les passions produits par la mal organization de la société, est la plus prompte à s'allarmer, et la plus propre à produire des tres grands folies.

Si écartant pour un moment les idées facheuses que la théologie nous donne d'un Dieu capricieux, dont les décrets partiiaux et despotiques décident du sort des humains, nous ne voulons fixer nos yeux que sur la bonté prétendue, que tous les hommes, même en tremblant devant ce Dieu, s'accordent à lui donner; si nous lui supposons le projet qu'on lui prête, de n'avoir travaillé que pour sa propre gloire, d'exiger les hommages des êtres intelligens; de ne chercher dans ses œuvres que le bien-être du genre-humain; comment concilier ces vues et ces dispositions avec l'ignorance vraiment invincible dans laquelle ce Dieu, si glorieux et si bon, laisse la plupart des hommes sur son compte? Si Dieu veut être connu, chéri, remercié, que ne se montre-t-il sous des traits favorables à tous ces êtres intelligens dont il veut être aimé et adoré? Pourquoi ne point se manifester à toute la terre d'une façon non équivoque, bien plus capable de nous convaincre, que ces révélations particuliers qui semblent accuser la Divinité d'une partialité facheuse pour quelqu'uns de ses créatures? Le tout-

puissant n'auroit-il donc pas des moyens plus convainquans de se montrer aux hommes que ces métamorphoses ridicules, ces incarnations prétendues, qui nous sont attestées par des écrivains si peu d'accord entre eux dans les récits qu'ils en font? Au lieu de tant de miracles, inventés pour prouver la mission divine de tant de législateurs, révévés par les différens peuples du monde, le souverain des esprits ne pouvoit-il pas convaincre tout d'un coup l'esprit humain des choses qu'il a voulu lui faire connoître? Au lieu de suspendre un soleil dans la voûte du firmament; au lieu de repandre sans ordre les étoiles, et les constellations qui remplissent l'espace, n'eut-il pas été plus conforme aux vues d'un Dieu si jaloux de sa gloire et si bien intentionné pour l'homme; d'écrire d'une façon non sujette à dispute, son nom, ses attributs, ses volontés permanentes en caractères ineffaçables, et lisibles également pour tous les habitants de la terre? Personne alors n'auroit pu douter de l'existence d'un Dieu, de ses volontés claires, de ses intentions visibles. Sous les yeux de ce Dieu si terrible personne n'auroit eu l'audace de violer ses ordonnances; nul mortel n'eût osé se mettre dans le cas d'attirer sa colère: enfin nul homme n'eût eu le front d'en imposer en son nom, ou d'interpréter ses volontés suivant ses propres phantasies.

En effet, quand même on admetteroît l'existence du Dieu théologique et la réalité des attributs si discordans qu'on lui donne, l'on ne peut en rien conclure, pour autorizer la conduite ou les cultes qu'on prescrit de lui rendre. La théologie est vraiment *le tonneau des Danaïdes*. A force de qualités contradictoires et d'assertions hasardées, elle a, pour ainsi dire, tellement garroté son Dieu qu'elle l'a mis dans l'impossibilité d'agir. S'il est infiniment bon quelle raison aurions-nous de le craindre? S'il est infiniment sage, de quoi nous inquiéter sur notre sort? S'il sait tout, pourquoi l'avertir de nos besoins, et le fatiguer de nos prières? S'il est partout, pourquoi lui élever des temples? S'il est maître de tout, pourquoi lui faire des sacrifices et des offrandes? S'il est juste, comment croire qu'il punisse des créatures qu'il a rempli de foiblesses? Si la grace fait tout en elles, quelle raison

auroit-il de les recompenser? S'il est tout-puissant, comment l'offenser, comment lui resister? S'il est raisonnable, comment se mettroit-il en colère contre des aveugles, à qui il a laissé la liberté de déraisonner? S'il est immuable, de quel droit prétendrions-nous faire changer ses decrets? S'il est inconcevable, pourquoi nous en occuper? S'IL A PARLE', POURQUOI L'UNIVERS N'EST-IL PAS CONVAINCU? Si la connoissance d'un Dieu est la plus nécessaire, pourquoi n'est-elle pas la plus évidente, et la plus claire. *Système de la Nature, London, 1781.*

The enlightened and benevolent Pliny thus publicly professes himself an atheist:—Quapropter effigiem Dei, formamque quærere, imbecillitatis humanæ reor. Quisquis est Deus (si modo est alius) et quacunq̃ue in parte, totus est sensus, totus est visus, totus auditus, totus animæ, totus animi, totus sui. * * * * * Imperfectæ vero in homine naturæ præcipua solatia ne deum quidem posse omnia. Namque nec sibi potest mortem consciscere, si velit, quod homini dedit optimum in tantis vita pœnis: nec mortales æternitate donare, aut revocare defunctos; nec facere ut qui vixit non vixerit, qui honores gessit non gesserit, nullumque habere in præteritum jus, præterquam oblivionis, atque (ut facetis quoque argumentis societas hæc cum deo copuletur) ut his dena viginta non sint, et multa similiter efficere non posse.—Per quæ, declaratur haud dubie, naturæ potentiam id quoque esse, quod Deum vocamus.

Plin. Nat. His. cap. de Deo.

The consistent Newtonian is necessarily an atheist. See *Sir W. Drummond's Academical Questions, chap. iii.*—Sir W. seems to consider the atheism to which it leads, as a sufficient presumption of the falsehood of the system of gravitation: but surely it is more consistent with the good faith of philosophy to admit a deduction from facts than an hypothesis incapable of proof, although it might militate with the obstinate preconceptions of the mob. Had this author, instead of inveighing against the guilt and absurdity of atheism, demonstrated

its falsehood, his conduct would have been more suited to the modesty of the sceptic and the toleration of the philosopher.



Omnia enim per Dei potentiam facta sunt: imo, quia natura potentia nulla est nisi ipsa Dei potentia, artem est nos catemus Dei potentiam non intelligere, quatemus causas naturales ignoramus; adeoque stulte ad eandem Dei potentiam recurritur, quando rei alicujus, causam naturalem, sive est, ipsam Dei potentiam ignoramus.

Spinosæ, Tract. Theologico-Pol. chap. i. page 14.

VII.—PAGE 473.

Ahasuerus, rise!

Ahasuerus the Jew crept forth from the dark cave of Mount Carmel. Near two thousand years have elapsed since he was first goaded by never-ending restlessness to rove the globe from pole to pole. When our Lord was wearied with the burthen of his ponderous cross, and wanted to rest before the door of Ahasuerus, the unfeeling wretch drove him away with brutality. The Saviour of mankind staggered, sinking under the heavy load, but uttered no complaint. An angel of death appeared before Ahasuerus, and exclaimed indignantly, "Barbarian! thou hast denied rest to the Son of Man: be it denied thee also, until he comes to judge the world."

A black demon, let loose from hell upon Ahasuerus, goads him now from country to country; he is denied the consolation which death affords, and precluded from the rest of the peaceful grave.

Ahasuerus crept forth from the dark cave of Mount Carmel—he shook the dust from his beard—and taking up one of the skulls heaped there, hurled it down the eminence: it rebounded from the earth in shivered atoms. This was my father! roared Ahasuerus. Seven more skulls rolled down from rock to rock; while the

infuriate Jew, following them with ghastly looks, exclaimed—And these were my wives! He still continued to hurl down scull after scull, roaring in dreadful accents—And these, and these, and these were my children! They *could die*; but I! reprobate wretch, alas! I cannot die! Dreadful beyond conception is the judgment that hangs over me. Jerusalem fell—I crushed the sucking babe, and precipitated myself into the destructive flames. I cursed the Romans—but, alas! alas! the restless curse held me by the hair,—and I could not die!

Rome the giantess fell—I placed myself before the falling statue—she fell, and did not crush me. Nations sprung up and disappeared before me;—but I remained and did not die. From cloud-encircled cliffs did I precipitate myself into the ocean; but the foaming billows cast me upon the shore, and the burning arrow of existence pierced my cold heart again. I leaped into Etna's flaming abyss, and roared with the giants for ten long months, polluting with my groans the Mount's sulphureous mouth—ah! ten long months. The volcano fermented, and in a fiery stream of lava cast me up. I lay torn by the torture-snakes of hell amid the glowing cinders, and yet continued to exist.—A forest was on fire: I darted on wings of fury and despair into the crackling wood. Fire dropped upon me from the trees, but the flames only singed my limbs; alas! it could not consume them.—I now mixed with the butchers of mankind, and plunged in the tempest of the raging battle. I roared defiance to the infuriate Gaul, defiance to the victorious German; but arrows and spears rebounded in shivers from my body. The Saracen's flaming sword broke upon my scull: balls in vain hissed upon me: the lightnings of battle glared harmless around my loins: in vain did the elephant trample on me, in vain the iron hoof of the wrathful steed! The mine, big with destructive power, burst upon me, and hurled me high in the air—I fell on heaps of smoking limbs, but was only singed. The giant's steel club rebounded from my body; the executioner's hand could not strangle me, the tiger's tooth could not pierce me, nor would the hungry lion in

the circus devour me. I cohabited with poisonous snakes, and pinched the red crest of the dragon.—The serpent stung, but could not destroy me. The dragon tormented, but dared not to devour me.—I now provoked the fury of tyrants: I said to Nero, Thou art a bloodhound! I said to Christiern, Thou art a bloodhound! I said to Muley Ismail, Thou art a bloodhound!—The tyrants invented cruel torments, but did not kill me.

—————Ha! not to be able to die—not to be able to die—not to be permitted to rest after the toils of life—to be doomed to be imprisoned for ever in the clay-formed dungeon—to be for ever clogged with this worthless body, its load of diseases and infirmities—to be condemned to hold for millenniums that yawning monster Sameness, and Time, that hungry hyena, ever bearing children, and ever devouring again her offspring!—Ha! not to be permitted to die! Awful avenger in heaven, hast thou in thine armoury of wrath a punishment more dreadful? then let it thunder upon me, command a hurricane to sweep me down to the foot of Carmel, that I there may lie extended; may pant, and writhe, and die!

This fragment is the translation of part of some German work, whose title I have vainly endeavoured to discover. I picked it up, dirty and torn, some years ago, in Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

VII.—PAGE 475.

I will beget a Son, and he shall bear
The sins of all the world.

A book is put into our hands when children, called the Bible, the purport of whose history is briefly this: That God made the earth in six days, and there planted a delightful garden, in which he placed the first pair of human beings. In the midst of the garden he planted a tree, whose fruit, although within their reach, they were forbidden to touch. That the Devil, in the shape of a snake, persuaded them to eat of this fruit; in consc-

quence of which God condemned both them and their posterity yet unborn, to satisfy his justice by their eternal misery. That, four thousand years after these events, (the human race in the meanwhile having gone unredeemed to perdition,) God engendered with the betrothed wife of a carpenter in Judea (whose virginity was nevertheless uninjured), and begat a Son, whose name was Jesus Christ; and who was crucified and died, in order that no more men might be devoted to hell-fire, he bearing the burthen of his Father's displeasure by proxy. The book states, in addition, that the soul of whoever disbelieves this sacrifice will be burned with everlasting fire.

During many ages of misery and darkness this story gained implicit belief; but at length men arose who suspected that it was a fable and imposture, and that Jesus Christ, so far from being a God, was only a man like themselves. But a numerous set of men, who derived and still derive immense emoluments from this opinion, in the shape of a popular belief, told the vulgar, that, if they did not believe in the Bible, they would be damned to all eternity; and burned, imprisoned, and poisoned all the unbiassed and unconnected enquirers who occasionally arose. They still oppress them, so far as the people, now become more enlightened, will allow.

The belief in all that the Bible contains, is called Christianity. A Roman governor of Judea, at the instances of a priest-led mob, crucified a man called Jesus eighteen centuries ago. He was a man of pure life, who desired to rescue his countrymen from the tyranny of their barbarous and degrading superstitions. The common fate of all who desire to benefit mankind awaited him. The rabble, at the instigation of the priests, demanded his death, although his very judge made public acknowledgment of his innocence. Jesus was sacrificed to the honour of that God with whom he was afterwards confounded. It is of importance, therefore, to distinguish between the pretended character of this being as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, and his real character as a man, who, for a vain attempt to reform the world, paid the forfeit of his life to that

overbearing tyranny which has since so long desolated the universe in his name. Whilst the one is a hypocritical demon, who announces himself as the God of compassion and peace, even whilst he stretches forth his blood-red hand with the sword of discord to waste the earth, having confessedly devised this scheme of desolation from eternity; the other stands in the foremost list of those true heroes, who have died in the glorious martyrdom of liberty, and have braved torture, contempt, and poverty, in the cause of suffering humanity.¹

The vulgar, ever in extremes, became persuaded that the crucifixion of Jesus was a supernatural event. Testimonies of miracles, so frequent in unenlightened ages, were not wanting to prove that he was something divine. This belief, rolling through the lapse of ages, met with the reveries of Plato and the reasonings of Aristotle, and acquired force and extent, until the divinity of Jesus became a dogma, which to dispute was death, which to doubt was infamy.

Christianity is now the established religion: he who attempts to impugn it, must be contented to behold murderers and traitors take precedence of him in public opinion; though, if his genius be equal to his courage, and assisted by a peculiar coalition of circumstances, future ages may exalt him to a divinity, and persecute others in his name, as he was persecuted in the name of his predecessor in the homage of the world.

The same means that have supported every other popular belief, have supported Christianity. War, imprisonment, assassination, and falsehood; deeds of unexampled and incomparable atrocity have made it what it is. The blood shed by the votaries of the God of mercy and peace, since the establishment of his religion, would probably suffice to drown all other sectaries now on the habitable globe. We derive from our ancestors a faith thus fostered and supported: we quarrel, persecute, and hate for its maintenance. Even under a government which, whilst it infringes the very right of thought and speech, boasts of permitting the

¹ Since writing this note I have some reason to suspect, that Jesus was an ambitious man, who aspired to the throne of Judea.

liberty of the press, a man is pilloried and imprisoned because he is a deist, and no one raises his voice in the indignation of outraged humanity. But it is ever a proof that the falsehood of a proposition is felt by those who use coercion, not reasoning, to procure its admission; and a dispassionate observer would feel himself more powerfully interested in favour of a man, who, depending on the truth of his opinions, simply stated his reasons for entertaining them, than in that of his aggressor, who, daringly avowing his unwillingness or incapacity to answer them by argument, proceeded to repress the energies and break the spirit of their promulgator by that torture and imprisonment whose infliction he could command.

Analogy seems to favour the opinion, that as, like other systems, Christianity has arisen and augmented, so like them it will decay and perish; that, as violence, darkness and deceit, not reasoning and persuasion, have procured its admission among mankind, so, when enthusiasm has subsided, and time, that infallible controverter of false opinions, has involved its pretended evidences in the darkness of antiquity, it will become obsolete; that Milton's poem alone will give permanency to the remembrance of its absurdities; and that men will laugh as heartily at grace, faith, redemption, and original sin, as they now do at the metamorphoses of Jupiter, the miracles of Romish saints, the efficacy of witchcraft, and the appearance of departed spirits.

Had the Christian religion commenced and continued by the mere force of reasoning and persuasion, the preceding analogy would be inadmissible. We should never speculate on the future obsolescence of a system perfectly conformable to nature and reason: it would endure so long as they endured; it would be a truth as indisputable as the light of the sun, the criminality of murder, and other facts, whose evidence, depending on our organization and relative situations, must remain acknowledged as satisfactory so long as man is man. It is an incontrovertible fact, the consideration of which ought to repress the hasty conclusions of credulity, or moderate its obstinacy in maintaining them, that, had the Jews not been a fanatical race of men,

had even the resolution of Pontius Pilate been equal to his candour, the Christian religion never could have prevailed, it could not even have existed: on so feeble a thread hangs the most cherished opinion of a sixth of the human race! When will the vulgar learn humility? When will the pride of ignorance blush at having believed before it could comprehend?

Either the Christian religion is true, or it is false: if true, it comes from God, and its authenticity can admit of doubt and dispute no further than its omnipotent author is willing to allow. Either the power or the goodness of God is called in question, if he leaves those doctrines most essential to the well being of man in doubt and dispute; the only ones which, since their promulgation, have been the subject of unceasing cavil, the cause of irreconcilable hatred. *If God has spoken, why is the universe not convinced?*

There is this passage in the Christian Scriptures: "Those who obey not God, and believe not the Gospel of his Son, shall be punished with everlasting destruction." This is the pivot upon which all religions turn: they all assume that it is in our power to believe or not to believe; whereas the mind can only believe that which it thinks true. A human being can only be supposed accountable for those actions which are influenced by his will. But belief is utterly distinct from and unconnected with volition: it is the apprehension of the agreement or disagreement of the ideas that compose any proposition. Belief is a passion, or involuntary operation of the mind; and, like other passions, its intensity is precisely proportionate to the degrees of excitement. Volition is essential to merit or demerit. But the Christian religion attaches the highest possible degrees of merit and demerit to that which is worthy of neither, and which is totally unconnected with the peculiar faculty of the mind, whose presence is essential to their being.

Christianity was intended to reform the world: had an all-wise Being planned it, nothing is more improbable than that it should have failed: omniscience would infallibly have foreseen the inutility of a scheme which experience demonstrates, to this age, to have been utterly unsuccessful.

Christianity inculcates the necessity of supplicating the Deity. Prayer may be considered under two points of view;—as an endeavour to change the intentions of God, or as a formal testimony of our obedience. But the former case supposes that the caprices of a limited intelligence can occasionally instruct the Creator of the world how to regulate the universe; and the latter, a certain degree of servility analogous to the loyalty demanded by earthly tyrants. Obedience indeed is only the pitiful and cowardly egotism of him who thinks that he can do something better than reason.

Christianity, like all other religions, rests upon miracles, prophecies, and martyrdoms. No religion ever existed, which had not its prophets, its attested miracles, and, above all, crowds of devotees who would bear patiently the most horrible tortures to prove its authenticity. It should appear that in no case can a discriminating mind subscribe to the genuineness of a miracle. A miracle is an infraction of nature's law, by a supernatural cause; by a cause acting beyond that eternal circle within which all things are included. God breaks through the law of nature, that he may convince mankind of the truth of that revelation which, in spite of his precautions, has been, since its introduction, the subject of unceasing schism and cavil.

Miracles resolve themselves into the following question:¹—Whether it is more probable the laws of nature, hitherto so immutably harmonious, should have undergone violation, or that a man should have told a lie? Whether it is more probable that we are ignorant of the natural cause of an event, or that we know the supernatural one? That, in old times, when the powers of nature were less known than at present, a certain set of men were themselves deceived, or had some hidden motive for deceiving others; or that God begat a son, who, in his legislation, measuring merit by belief, evidenced himself to be totally ignorant of the powers of the human mind—of what is voluntary, and what is the contrary?

We have many instances of men telling lies;—none of

¹ See Hume's Essay, vol. ii. page 121.

an infraction of nature's laws, those laws of whose government alone we have any knowledge or experience. The records of all nations afford innumerable instances of men deceiving others either from vanity or interest, or themselves being deceived by the limitedness of their views and their ignorance of natural causes: but where is the accredited case of God having come upon earth, to give the lie to his own creations? There would be something truly wonderful in the appearance of a ghost; but the assertion of a child that he saw one as he passed through the church-yard is universally admitted to be less miraculous.

But even supposing that a man should raise a dead body to life before our eyes, and on this fact rest his claim to being considered the son of God;—the Humane Society restores drowned persons, and because it makes no mystery of the method it employs, its members are not mistaken for the sons of God. All that we have a right to infer from our ignorance of the cause of any event is that we do not know it: had the Mexicans attended to this simple rule when they heard the cannon of the Spaniards, they would not have considered them as gods: the experiments of modern chemistry would have defied the wisest philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome to have accounted for them on natural principles. An author of strong common sense has observed, that "a miracle is no miracle at second-hand;" he might have added, that a miracle is no miracle in any case; for until we are acquainted with all natural causes, we have no reason to imagine others.

There remains to be considered another proof of Christianity—Prophecy. A book is written before a certain event, in which this event is foretold; how could the prophet have foreknown it without inspiration; how could he have been inspired without God? The greatest stress is laid on the prophecies of Moses and Hosea on the dispersion of the Jews, and that of Isaiah concerning the coming of the Messiah. The prophecy of Moses is a collection of every possible cursing and blessing; and it is so far from being marvellous that the one of dispersion should have been fulfilled, that it would have been more

surprising if, out of all these, none should have taken effect. In Deuteronomy, chap. xxviii, ver. 64, where Moses explicitly foretells the dispersion, he states that they shall there serve gods of wood and stone: "And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even to the other, *and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even gods of wood and stone.*" The Jews are at this day remarkably tenacious of their religion. Moses also declares that they shall be subjected to these curses for disobedience to his ritual: "And it shall come to pass if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all the commandments and statutes which I command you this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee." Is this the real reason? The third, fourth and fifth chapters of Hosea are a piece of immodest confession. The indelicate type might apply in a hundred senses to a hundred things. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is more explicit, yet it does not exceed in clearness the oracles of Delphos. The historical proof, that Moses, Isaiah and Hosea did write when they are said to have written, is far from being clear and circumstantial.

But prophecy requires proof in its character as a miracle; we have no right to suppose that a man foreknew future events from God, until it is demonstrated that he neither could know them by his own exertions, nor that the writings which contain the prediction could possibly have been fabricated after the event pretended to be foretold. It is more probable that writings, pretending to divine inspiration, should have been fabricated after the fulfilment of their pretended prediction, than that they should have really been divinely inspired; when we consider that the latter supposition makes God at once the creator of the human mind and ignorant of its primary powers, particularly as we have numberless instances of false religions, and forged prophecies of things long past, and no accredited case of God having conversed with men directly or indirectly. It is also possible that the description of an event might have foregone its occurrence;

but this is far from being a legitimate proof of a divine revelation, as many men, not pretending to the character of a prophet, have nevertheless, in this sense, prophesied.

Lord Chesterfield was never yet taken for a prophet, even by a bishop, yet he uttered this remarkable prediction: "The despotic government of France is screwed up to the highest pitch; a revolution is fast approaching; that revolution, I am convinced, will be radical and sanguinary." This appeared in the letters of the prophet long before the accomplishment of this wonderful prediction. Now, have these particulars come to pass, or have they not? If they have, how could the Earl have foreknown them without inspiration? If we admit the truth of the Christian religion on testimony such as this, we must admit, on the same strength of evidence, that God has affixed the highest rewards to belief, and the eternal tortures of the never-dying worm to disbelief; both of which have been demonstrated to be involuntary.

The last proof of the Christian religion depends on the influence of the Holy Ghost. Theologians divide the influence of the Holy Ghost into its ordinary and extraordinary modes of operation. The latter is supposed to be that which inspired the Prophets and Apostles; and the former to be the grace of God, which summarily makes known the truth of his revelation, to those whose mind is fitted for its reception by a submissive perusal of his word. Persons convinced in this manner, can do anything but account for their conviction, describe the time at which it happened, or the manner in which it came upon them. It is supposed to enter the mind by other channels than those of the senses, and therefore professes to be superior to reason founded on their experience.

Admitting, however, the usefulness or possibility of a divine revelation, unless we demolish the foundations of all human knowledge, it is requisite that our reason should previously demonstrate its genuineness; for, before we extinguish the steady ray of reason and common sense, it is fit that we should discover whether we cannot do without their assistance, whether or no there be any other which may suffice to guide us through the labyrinth of

life¹: for, if a man is to be inspired upon all occasions, if he is to be sure of a thing because he is sure, if the ordinary operations of the spirit are not to be considered very extraordinary modes of demonstration, if enthusiasm is to usurp the place of proof, and madness that of sanity, all reasoning is superfluous. The Mahometan dies fighting for his prophet, the Indian immolates himself at the chariot-wheels of Brahma, the Hottentot worships an insect, the Negro a bunch of feathers, the Mexican sacrifices human victims! Their degree of conviction must certainly be very strong: it cannot arise from conviction, it must from feelings, the reward of their prayers. If each of these should affirm, in opposition to the strongest possible arguments, that inspiration carried internal evidence, I fear their inspired brethren, the orthodox Missionaries, would be so uncharitable as to pronounce them obstinate.

Miracles cannot be received as testimonies of a disputed fact, because all human testimony has ever been insufficient to establish the possibility of miracles. That which is incapable of proof itself, is no proof of any thing else. Prophecy has also been rejected by the test of reason. Those, then, who have been actually inspired, are the only true believers in the Christian religion.

Mox numine viso

Virginei tumuere sinus, innuptaque mater

Arcano stupuit compleri viscera partu

Auctorem peritura suum. Mortalia corda

Artificem texere poli, latuitque sub uno

Pectore, qui totum late complectitur orbem.

Claudian, Carmen Paschali.

Does not so monstrous and disgusting an absurdity carry its own infamy and refutation with itself?



VIII.—PAGE 484.

Him, (still from hope to hope the bliss pursuing,
Which, from the exhaustless lore of human weal

¹ See Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, book iv. chap. xix., on Enthusiasm.

Dawns on the virtuous mind,) the thoughts that rise
In time-destroying infiniteness, gift
With self-enshrined eternity, &c.

Time is our consciousness of the succession of ideas in our mind. Vivid sensation, of either pain or pleasure, makes the time seem long, as the common phrase is, because it renders us more acutely conscious of our ideas. If a mind be conscious of an hundred ideas during one minute, by the clock, and of two hundred during another, the latter of these spaces would actually occupy so much greater extent in the mind as two exceed one in quantity. If, therefore, the human mind, by any future improvement of its sensibility, should become conscious of an infinite number of ideas in a minute, that minute would be eternity. I do not hence infer that the actual space between the birth and death of a man will ever be prolonged; but that his sensibility is perfectible, and that the number of ideas which his mind is capable of receiving is indefinite. One man is stretched on the rack during twelve hours; another sleeps soundly in his bed: the difference of time perceived by these two persons is immense; one hardly will believe that half an hour has elapsed, the other could credit that centuries had flown during his agony. Thus, the life of a man of virtue and talent, who should die in his thirtieth year, is, with regard to his own feelings, longer than that of a miserable priest-ridden slave, who dreams out a century of dulness. The one has perpetually cultivated his mental faculties, has rendered himself master of his thoughts, can abstract and generalize amid the lethargy of every-day business;—the other can slumber over the brightest moments of his being, and is unable to remember the happiest hour of his life. Perhaps the perishing ephemeron enjoys a longer life than the tortoise.

Dark flood of time!

Roll as it listeth thee—I measure not
By months or moments thy ambiguous course.
Another may stand by me on the brink
And watch the bubble whirled beyond his ken

That pauses at my feet. The sense of love,
 The thirst for action, and the impassioned thought
 Prolong my being: if I wake no more,
 My life more actual living will contain
 Than some grey veterans' of the world's cold school,
 Whose listless hours unprofitably roll,
 By one enthusiast feeling unredeemed.

*See Godwin's Pol. Jus. vol. i. page 411;—and
 Condorcet, Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique
 des Progrès de l'Esprit Humain, Epoque ix.*

VIII.—PAGE 485.

No longer now
 He slays the lamb that looks him in the face.

I hold that the depravity of the physical and moral nature of man originated in his unnatural habits of life. The origin of man, like that of the universe of which he is a part, is enveloped in impenetrable mystery. His generations either had a beginning, or they had not. The weight of evidence in favour of each of these suppositions seems tolerably equal; and it is perfectly unimportant to the present argument which is assumed. The language spoken however by the mythology of nearly all religions seems to prove, that at some distant period man forsook the path of nature, and sacrificed the purity and happiness of his being to unnatural appetites. The date of this event seems to have also been that of some great change in the climates of the earth, with which it has an obvious correspondence. The allegory of Adam and Eve eating of the tree of evil, and entailing upon their posterity the wrath of God and the loss of everlasting life, admits of no other explanation than the disease and crime that have flowed from unnatural diet. Milton was so well aware of this, that he makes Raphael thus exhibit to Adam the consequence of his disobedience:—

Immediately a place
 Before his eyes appeared: sad, noisome, dark:

A lazar-house it seem'd; wherein were laid
 Numbers of all diseased: all maladies
 Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
 Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
 Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
 Intestine stone and ulcer, cholic pangs,
 Dæmoniac frenzy, moping melancholy,
 And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
 Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,
 Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.

And how many thousands more might not be added to
 this frightful catalogue!

The story of Prometheus is one likewise which, although
 universally admitted to be allegorical, has never been
 satisfactorily explained. Prometheus stole fire from heaven,
 and was chained for this crime to mount Caucasus, where
 a vulture continually devoured his liver, that grew to meet
 its hunger. Hesiod says, that, before the time of Prometheus,
 mankind were exempt from suffering; that they
 enjoyed a vigorous youth, and that death, when at length
 it came, approached like sleep, and gently closed their
 eyes. Again, so general was this opinion, that Horace, a
 poet of the Augustan age, writes—

Audax omnia perpeti,
 Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas;
 Audax Iapeti genus
 Ignem fraude mala gentibus intulit:
 Post ignem ætheriâ domo
 Subductum, macies et nova febrium
 Terris incubuit cohors,
 Semotique prius tarda necessitas
 Lethi corripuit gradum.

How plain a language is spoken by all this. Prometheus
 (who represents the human race) effected some great
 change in the condition of his nature, and applied fire to
 culinary purposes; thus inventing an expedient for
 screening from his disgust the horrors of the shambles.
 From this moment his vitals were devoured by the vulture
 of disease. It consumed his being in every shape of its

loathsome and infinite variety, inducing the soul-quelling sinkings of premature and violent death. All vice arose from the ruin of healthful innocence. Tyranny, superstition, commerce, and inequality, were then first known, when reason vainly attempted to guide the wanderings of exacerbated passion. I conclude this part of the subject with an extract from Mr. Newton's Defence of Vegetable Regimen, from whom I have borrowed this interpretation of the fable of Prometheus.

"Making allowance for such transposition of the events of the allegory as time might produce after the important truths were forgotten, which this portion of the ancient mythology was intended to transmit, the drift of the fable seems to be this:—Man at his creation was endowed with the gift of perpetual youth; that is, he was not formed to be a sickly suffering creature as we now see him, but to enjoy health, and to sink by slow degrees into the bosom of his parent earth without disease or pain. Prometheus first taught the use of animal food (*primus bovem occidit Prometheus*¹) and of fire, with which to render it more digestible and pleasing to the taste. Jupiter, and the rest of the gods, foreseeing the consequences of these inventions, were amused or irritated at the short-sighted devices of the newly-formed creature, and left him to experience the sad effects of them. Thirst, the necessary concomitant of a flesh diet," (perhaps of all diet vitiated by culinary preparation,) "ensued; water was resorted to, and man forfeited the inestimable gift of health which he had received from heaven: he became diseased, the partaker of a precarious existence, and no longer descended slowly to his grave."²

But just disease to luxury succeeds,
And every death its own avenger breeds;
The fury passions from that blood began,
And turned on man a fiercer savage—man.

Man, and the animals whom he has infected with his society, or depraved by his dominion, are alone diseased. The wild hog, the mouflon, the bison, and the wolf, are perfectly exempt from malady, and invariably die either

¹ Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vii. sect. 57.

² Return to Nature. Cadell, 1811.

from external violence, or natural old age. But the domestic hog, the sheep, the cow, and the dog, are subject to an incredible variety of distempers; and, like the corrupters of their nature, have physicians who thrive upon their miseries. The supereminence of man is like Satan's, a supereminence of pain; and the majority of his species, doomed to penury, disease and crime, have reason to curse the untoward event, that by enabling him to communicate his sensations, raised him above the level of his fellow animals. But the steps that have been taken are irrevocable. The whole of human science is comprised in one question:—How can the advantages of intellect and civilization be reconciled with the liberty and pure pleasures of natural life? How can we take the benefits, and reject the evils of the system, which is now interwoven with all the fibres of our being?—I believe that abstinence from animal food and spirituous liquors would in a great measure capacitate us for the solution of this important question.

It is true, that mental and bodily derangement is attributable in part to other deviations from rectitude and nature than those which concern diet. The mistakes cherished by society respecting the connection of the sexes, whence the misery and diseases of unsatisfied celibacy, unenjoying prostitution, and the premature arrival of puberty necessarily spring; the putrid atmosphere of crowded cities; the exhalations of chemical processes; the muffling of our bodies in superfluous apparel; the absurd treatment of infants:—all these, and innumerable other causes, contribute their mite to the mass of human evil.

Comparative anatomy teaches us that man resembles frugivorous animals in everything, and carnivorous in nothing; he has neither claws wherewith to seize his prey, nor distinct and pointed teeth to tear the living fibre. A Mandarin of the first class, with nails two inches long, would probably find them alone inefficient to hold even a hare. After every subterfuge of gluttony, the bull must be degraded into the ox, and the ram into the wether, by an unnatural and inhuman operation, that the flaccid fibre may offer a fainter resistance to rebellious nature. It is only by softening and disguising dead flesh by culinary

preparation, that it is rendered susceptible of mastication or digestion; and that the sight of its bloody juices and raw horror does not excite intolerable loathing and disgust. Let the advocate of animal food force himself to a decisive experiment on its fitness, and, as Plutarch recommends, tear a living lamb with his teeth, and plunging his head into its vitals, slake his thirst with the steaming blood; when fresh from the deed of horror, let him revert to the irresistible instincts of nature that would rise in judgment against it, and say, Nature formed me for such work as this. Then, and then only, would he be consistent.

Man resembles no carnivorous animal. There is no exception, unless man be one, to the rule of herbivorous animals having cellulated colons.

The orang-outang perfectly resembles man both in the order and number of his teeth. The orang-outang is the most anthropomorphous of the ape tribe, all of which are strictly frugivorous. There is no other species of animals, which live on different food, in which this analogy exists.¹ In many frugivorous animals, the canine teeth are more pointed and distinct than those of man. The resemblance also of the human stomach to that of the orang-outang, is greater than to that of any other animal.

The intestines are also identical with those of herbivorous animals, which present a larger surface for absorption and have ample and cellulated colons. The cœcum also, though short, is larger than that of carnivorous animals; and even here the orang-outang retains its accustomed similarity.

The structure of the human frame then is that of one fitted to a pure vegetable diet, in every essential particular. It is true, that the reluctance to abstain from animal food, in those who have been long accustomed to its stimulus, is so great in some persons of weak minds, as to be scarcely overcome; but this is far from bringing any argument in its favour. A lamb, which was fed for some time on flesh by a ship's crew, refused its natural diet at the end of the voyage. There are numerous instances of

¹ Cuvier, *Leçons d'Anat. Comp.* tom. iii. pages 169, 373, 448, 465, 480. Rees's *Cyclopædia*, article Man.

horses, sheep, oxen, and even wood-pigeons, having been taught to live upon flesh, until they have loathed their natural aliment. Young children evidently prefer pastry, oranges, apples, and other fruit, to the flesh of animals; until, by the gradual depravation of the digestive organs, the free use of vegetables has for a time produced serious inconveniences; *for a time*, I say, since there never was an instance wherein a change from spirituous liquors and animal food to vegetables and pure water, has failed ultimately to invigorate the body, by rendering its juices bland and consentaneous, and to restore to the mind that cheerfulness and elasticity, which not one in fifty possesses on the present system. A love of strong liquors is also with difficulty taught to infants. Almost every one remembers the wry faces which the first glass of port produced. Unsophisticated instinct is invariably unerring; but to decide on the fitness of animal food, from the perverted appetites which its constrained adoption produces, is to make the criminal a judge in his own cause: it is even worse, it is appealing to the infatuated drunkard in a question of the salubrity of brandy.

What is the cause of morbid action in the animal system? Not the air we breathe, for our fellow denizens of nature breathe the same uninjured; not the water we drink, (if remote from the pollutions of man and his inventions,¹) for the animals drink it too; not the earth we tread upon; not the unobscured sight of glorious nature, in the wood, the field, or the expanse of sky and ocean; nothing that we are or do in common with the undiseased inhabitants of the forest. Something then wherein we differ from them: our habit of altering our food by fire, so that our appetite is no longer a just criterion for the fitness of its gratification. Except in children, there remain no traces of that instinct which determines, in all other animals, what aliment is natural or otherwise; and so perfectly obliterated are they in the reasoning adults of

¹ The necessity of resorting to some means of purifying water, and the disease which arises from its adulteration in civilized countries, is sufficiently apparent --- See Dr. Lambe's Reports on Cancer. I do not assert that the use of water is in itself unnatural, but that the unperturbed palate would swallow no liquid capable of occasioning disease.

our species, that it has become necessary to urge considerations drawn from comparative anatomy to prove that we are naturally frugivorous.

Crime is madness. Madness is disease. Whenever the cause of disease shall be discovered, the root, from which all vice and misery have so long overshadowed the globe, will lie bare to the axe. All the exertions of man, from that moment, may be considered as tending to the clear profit of his species. No sane mind in a sane body resolves upon a real crime. It is a man of violent passions, blood-shot eyes, and swollen veins, that alone can grasp the knife of murder. The system of a simple diet promises no Utopian advantages. It is no mere reform of legislation, whilst the furious passions and evil propensities of the human heart, in which it had its origin, are still unassuaged. It strikes at the root of all evil, and is an experiment which may be tried with success, not alone by nations, but by small societies, families, and even individuals. In no cases has a return to vegetable diet produced the slightest injury; in most it has been attended with changes undeniably beneficial. Should ever a physician be born with the genius of Locke, I am persuaded that he might trace all bodily and mental derangements to our unnatural habits, as clearly as that philosopher has traced all knowledge to sensation. What prolific sources of disease are not those mineral and vegetable poisons that have been introduced for its extirpation! How many thousands have become murderers and robbers, bigots and domestic tyrants, dissolute and abandoned adventurers, from the use of fermented liquors; who, had they slaked their thirst only with pure water, would have lived but to diffuse the happiness of their own unperverted feelings? How many groundless opinions and absurd institutions have not received a general sanction from the sottishness and intemperance of individuals! Who will assert that, had the populace of Paris satisfied their hunger at the ever-furnished table of vegetable nature, they would have lent their brutal suffrage to the proscription-list of Robespierre? Could a set of men, whose passions were not perverted by unnatural stimuli, look with coolness on an *auto da fè*? Is it to be

believed that a being of gentle feelings, rising from his meal of roots, would take delight in sports of blood? Was Nero a man of temperate life? could you read calm health in his cheek, flushed with ungovernable propensities of hatred for the human race? Did Muley Ismael's pulse beat evenly, was his skin transparent, did his eyes beam with healthfulness, and its invariable concomitants, cheerfulness and benignity? Though history has decided none of these questions, a child could not hesitate to answer in the negative. Surely the bile-suffused cheek of Buonaparte, his wrinkled brow, and yellow eye, the ceaseless inquietude of his nervous system, speak no less plainly the character of his unresting ambition than his murders and his victories. It is impossible, had Buonaparte descended from a race of vegetable feeders, that he could have had either the inclination or the power to ascend the throne of the Bourbons. The desire of tyranny could scarcely be excited in the individual, the power to tyrannize would certainly not be delegated by a society neither frenzied by inebriation nor rendered impotent and irrational by disease. Pregnant indeed with inexhaustible calamity is the renunciation of instinct, as it concerns our physical nature; arithmetic cannot enumerate, nor reason perhaps suspect, the multitudinous sources of disease in civilized life. Even common water, that apparently innoxious pabulum, when corrupted by the filth of populous cities, is a deadly and insidious destroyer.¹ Who can wonder that all the inducements held out by God himself in the Bible to virtue should have been vainer than a nurse's tale; and that those dogmas, by which he has there excited and justified the most ferocious propensities, should have alone been deemed essential; whilst Christians are in the daily practice of all those habits which have infected with disease and crime, not only the reprobate sons, but these favoured children of the common Father's love. Omnipotence itself could not save them from the consequences of this original and universal sin.

There is no disease, bodily or mental, which adoption of

¹ Lambe's Reports on Cancer.

vegetable diet and pure water has not infallibly mitigated, wherever the experiment has been fairly tried. Debility is gradually converted into strength, disease into healthfulness; madness, in all its hideous variety, from the ravings of the fettered maniac, to the unaccountable irrationalities of ill temper, that make a hell of domestic life, into a calm and considerate evenness of temper, that alone might offer a certain pledge of the future moral reformation of society. On a natural system of diet, old age would be our last and our only malady; the term of our existence would be protracted; we should enjoy life, and no longer preclude others from the enjoyment of it; all sensational delights would be infinitely more exquisite and perfect; the very sense of being would then be a continued pleasure, such as we now feel it in some few and favoured moments of our youth. By all that is sacred in our hopes for the human race, I conjure those who love happiness and truth, to give a fair trial to the vegetable system. Reasoning is surely superfluous on a subject whose merits an experience of six months would set for ever at rest. But it is only among the enlightened and benevolent that so great a sacrifice of appetite and prejudice can be expected, even though its ultimate excellence should not admit of dispute. It is found easier, by the short-sighted victims of disease, to palliate their torments by medicine, than to prevent them by regimen. The vulgar of all ranks are invariably sensual and indocile; yet I cannot but feel myself persuaded, that when the benefits of vegetable diet are mathematically proved; when it is as clear, that those who live naturally are exempt from premature death, as that nine is not one, the most sottish of mankind will feel a preference towards a long and tranquil, contrasted with a short and painful life. On the average, out of sixty persons, four die in three years. Hopes are entertained that, in April 1814, a statement will be given, that sixty persons, all having lived more than three years on vegetables and pure water, are then *in perfect health*. More than two years have now elapsed; *not one of them has died*; no such example will be found in any sixty persons taken at random. Seventeen persons of all ages (the families of Dr. Lambe and Mr.

Newton) have lived for seven years on this diet without a death, and almost without the slightest illness. Surely, when we consider that some of these were infants, and one a martyr to asthma now nearly subdued, we may challenge any seventeen persons taken at random in this city to exhibit a parallel case. Those who may have been excited to question the rectitude of established habits of diet, by these loose remarks, should consult Mr. Newton's luminous and eloquent essay.¹

When these proofs come fairly before the world, and are clearly seen by all who understand arithmetic, it is scarcely possible that abstinence from aliments demonstrably pernicious should not become universal. In proportion to the number of proselytes, so will be the weight of evidence: and when a thousand persons can be produced, living on vegetables and distilled water, who have to dread no disease but old age, the world will be compelled to regard animal flesh and fermented liquors as slow but certain poisons. The change which would be produced by simpler habits on political economy is sufficiently remarkable. The monopolizing eater of animal flesh would no longer destroy his constitution by devouring an acre at a meal, and many loaves of bread would cease to contribute to gout, madness and apoplexy, in the shape of a pint of porter, or a dram of gin, when appeasing the long-protracted famine of the hard-working peasant's hungry babes. The quantity of nutritious vegetable matter, consumed in fattening the carcase of an ox, would afford ten times the sustenance, undepraving indeed, and incapable of generating disease, if gathered immediately from the bosom of the earth. The most fertile districts of the habitable globe are now actually cultivated by men for animals, at a delay and waste of aliment absolutely incapable of calculation. It is only the wealthy that can, to any great degree, even now, indulge the unnatural craving for dead flesh, and they pay for the greater licence of the privilege by subjection to supernumerary diseases. Again, the spirit of the nation

¹ Return to Nature, or Defence of Vegetable Regimen. Cadell, 1811.

that should take the lead in this great reform, would insensibly become agricultural; commerce, with all its vice, selfishness and corruption, would gradually decline; more natural habits would produce gentler manners, and the excessive complication of political relations would be so far simplified, that every individual might feel and understand why he loved his country, and took a personal interest in its welfare. How would England, for example, depend on the caprices of foreign rulers, if she contained within herself all the necessities, and despised whatever they possessed of the luxuries of life? How could they starve her into compliance with their views. Of what consequence would it be that they refused to take her woollen manufactures, when large and fertile tracts of the island ceased to be allotted to the waste of pasturage? On a natural system of diet, we should require no spices from India; no wines from Portugal, Spain, France, or Madeira; none of those multitudinous articles of luxury, for which every corner of the globe is rifled, and which are the causes of so much individual rivalry, such calamitous and sanguinary national disputes. In the history of modern times, the avarice of commercial monopoly, no less than the ambition of weak and wicked chiefs, seems to have fomented the universal discord, to have added stubbornness to the mistakes of cabinets, and indocility to the infatuation of the people. Let it ever be remembered, that it is the direct influence of commerce to make the interval between the richest and the poorest man wider and more unconquerable. Let it be remembered, that it is a foe to every thing of real worth and excellence in the human character. The odious and disgusting aristocracy of wealth is built upon the ruins of all that is good in chivalry or republicanism; and luxury is the forerunner of a barbarism scarce capable of cure. Is it impossible to realize a state of society, where all the energies of man shall be directed to the production of his solid happiness? Certainly, if this advantage (the object of all political speculation) be in any degree attainable, it is attainable only by a community, which holds out no factitious incentives to the avarice and ambition of the

few, and which is internally organized for the liberty, security and comfort of the many. None must be entrusted with power (and money is the completest species of power) who do not stand pledged to use it exclusively for the general benefit. But the use of animal flesh and fermented liquors directly militates with this equality of the rights of man. The peasant cannot gratify these fashionable cravings without leaving his family to starve. Without disease and war, those sweeping curtailers of population, pasturage would include a waste too great to be afforded. The labour requisite to support a family is far lighter¹ than is usually supposed. The peasantry work, not only for themselves, but for the aristocracy, the army, and the manufacturers.

The advantage of a reform in diet is obviously greater than that of any other. It strikes at the root of the evil. To remedy the abuses of legislation, before we annihilate the propensities by which they are produced, is to suppose, that by taking away the effect, the cause will cease to operate. But the efficacy of this system depends entirely on the proselytism of individuals, and grounds its merits, as a benefit to the community, upon the total change of the dietetic habits in its members. It proceeds securely from a number of particular cases to one that is universal, and has this advantage over the contrary mode, that one error does not invalidate all that has gone before.

Let not too much, however, be expected from this system. The healthiest among us is not exempt from hereditary disease. The most symmetrical, athletic, and long-lived, is a being inexpressibly inferior to what he would have been, had not the unnatural habits of his ancestors accumulated for him a certain portion of malady and deformity. In the most perfect specimen of civilized man, something is still found wanting by the physiological

¹ It has come under the author's experience, that some of the workmen on an embankment in North Wales, who, in consequence of the inability of the proprietor to pay them, seldom received their wages, have supported large families by cultivating small spots of sterile ground by moonlight. In the notes to Pratt's Poem, "Bread, or the Poor," is an account of an industrious labourer, who, by working in a small garden, before and after his day's task, attained to an enviable state of independence.

critic. Can a return to nature, then, instantaneously eradicate predispositions that have been slowly taking root in the silence of innumerable ages?—Indubitably not. All that I contend for is, that from the moment of the relinquishing all unnatural habits, no new disease is generated; and that the predisposition to hereditary maladies gradually perishes, for want of its accustomed supply. In cases of consumption, cancer, gout, asthma, and scrofula, such is the invariable tendency of a diet of vegetables and pure water.

Those who may be induced by these remarks to give the vegetable system a fair trial, should, in the first place, date the commencement of their practice from the moment of their conviction. All depends upon breaking through a pernicious habit resolutely and at once. Dr. Trotter¹ asserts, that no drunkard was ever reformed by gradually relinquishing his dram. Animal flesh, in its effects on the human stomach, is analogous to a dram. It is similar in the kind, though differing in the degree, of its operation. The proselyte to a pure diet must be warned to expect a temporary diminution of muscular strength. The subtraction of a powerful stimulus will suffice to account for this event. But it is only temporary, and is succeeded by an equable capability for exertion, far surpassing his former various and fluctuating strength. Above all, he will acquire an easiness of breathing, by which such exertion is performed, with a remarkable exemption from that painful and difficult panting now felt by almost every one, after hastily climbing an ordinary mountain. He will be equally capable of bodily exertion, or mental application, after as before his simple meal. He will feel none of the narcotic effects of ordinary diet. Irritability, the direct consequence of exhausting stimuli, would yield to the power of natural and tranquil impulses. He will no longer pine under the lethargy of ennui, that unconquerable weariness of life, more to be dreaded than death itself. He will escape the epidemic madness, which broods over its own injurious notions of the Deity, and “realizes the hell that priests and

¹ See Trotter on the Nervous Temperament.

beldams feign." Every man forms as it were his god from his own character; to the divinity of one of simple habits no offering would be more acceptable than the happiness of his creatures. He would be incapable of hating or persecuting others for the love of God. He will find, moreover, a system of simple diet to be a system of perfect epicurism. He will no longer be incessantly occupied in blunting and destroying those organs from which he expects his gratification. The pleasures of taste to be derived from a dinner of potatoes, beans, peas, turnips, lettuces, with a dessert of apples, gooseberries, strawberries, currants, raspberries, and, in winter, oranges, apples and pears, is far greater than is supposed. Those who wait until they can eat this plain fare with the sauce of appetite will scarcely join with the hypocritical sensualist at a lord-mayor's feast, who declaims against the pleasures of the table. Solomon kept a thousand concubines, and owned in despair that all was vanity. The man whose happiness is constituted by the society of one amiable woman, would find some difficulty in sympathizing with the disappointment of this venerable debauchee.

I address myself not only to the young enthusiast, the ardent devotee of truth and virtue, the pure and passionate moralist, yet unvitiated by the contagion of the world. He will embrace a pure system, from its abstract truth, its beauty, its simplicity, and its promise of wide-extended benefit; unless custom has turned poison into food, he will hate the brutal pleasures of the chase by instinct; it will be a contemplation full of horror, and disappointment to his mind, that beings capable of the gentlest and most admirable sympathies, should take delight in the death-pangs and last convulsions of dying animals. The elderly man, whose youth has been poisoned by intemperance, or who has lived with apparent moderation, and is afflicted with a variety of painful maladies, would find his account in a beneficial change produced without the risk of poisonous medicines. The mother, to whom the perpetual restlessness of disease, and unaccountable deaths incident to her children, are the causes of incurable unhappiness, would on this diet experience the satisfaction of beholding their perpetual

healths and natural playfulness.¹ The most valuable lives are daily destroyed by diseases, that it is dangerous to palliate and impossible to cure by medicine. How much longer will man continue to pimp for the gluttony of death, his most insidious, implacable and eternal foe?

Ἄλλὰ δρακόντας ἀγριῆς καλεῖτε καὶ παρδελεῖς καὶ λέοντας, αὐτοῖδέ μ' αἰφονεῖτέ εἰς ὁμοτητα καταλιπόντες ἐκείνους ἑδέν. ἐκείνους μὲν ὁ φόνος τροφή, ἡμῖν δὲ ὄψον ἐστίν.

* * * * *

Ὅτι γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνθρώπων κατὰ φύσιν τὸ σαρκοφαγεῖν, πρῶτον μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν σωμάτων δηλεῖται τῆς κατασκευῆς. Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔοικε τὸ ἀνθρώπου σῶμα τῶν ἐπὶ σαρκοφαγίᾳ γεγονότων, ἔ, χρωπότης χεῖλες, οὐκ ὀξύτης ὄνυχος ἔ τραχύτης ὀδόντων πρόσεστιν, ἔ κοιλίας ευτομία, καὶ πνεύματος θερμότης, τρέφαι, καὶ κατεργάσασθαι δυνατὴ τό βαρὺ καὶ κρεῶδες; ἀλλ' αὐτόθεν ἡ φύσις τῇ λειότητι τῶν ὀδόντων, καὶ τῇ σμικρότητι τῆς σωματος, καὶ τῇ μαλακότητι τῆς γλώσσης, καὶ τῇ πρὸς πέψιν ἀμβλύτητι τοῦ πνεύματος, ἐξόμνυται τὴν σαρκοφαγίαν. Εἰ δὲ λεγέις πεφυκέσαι σεαυτὸν ἐπὶ τοιαύτην ἐδώδην, ὃ βέλει φαγεῖν, πρῶτον αὐτὸς ἀπόκτεινον. ἀλλ' αὐτός, διὰ σεαυτῆς μὴ χρησάμενος κοπίδῃ, μὴδὲ τυμπανῷ μὴδὲ πελέκει. ἀλλὰ ὡς λύκοι, καὶ ἄρκτοι, καὶ λέοντες αὐτοὶ ὡς ἐσθιέσι φόνευσιν, ἀνέλε δῆγματι βῆν, ἢ σώματι σῦν, ἢ ἄρνα ἢ λαγῶν διάρρηξον, καὶ φάγε προσπεσὼν ἔτι ξῶντος ὡς ἐκεῖνα.

* * * * *

Ἡμεῖς δὲ ἔτις ἐν τῷ μαιφῶν τρυφῶμεν, ὥστε ὄψον τὸ κρέας προσαγορεύομεν, εἴτα ὄψων πρὸς αὐτὸ τὸ κρέας

¹ See Mr. Newton's book. His children are the most beautiful and healthy creatures it is possible to conceive; the girls are perfect models for a sculptor; their dispositions are also the most gentle and conciliating; the judicious treatment, which they experience in other points, may be a correlative cause of this. In the first five years of their life, of 18,000 children that are born, 7,500 die of various diseases; and how many more of those that survive are not rendered miserable by maladies not immediately mortal? The quality and quantity of a woman's milk are materially injured by the use of dead flesh. In an island near Iceland, where no vegetables are to be got, the children invariably die of tetanus, before they are three weeks old, and the population is supplied from the main land. --- Sir G. Mackenzie's Hist. of Iceland. See also Emile, chap. i. pages 53, 54 56.

δέομεθα, ἀναμιγνύντες ἔλαιον, οἶνον, μέλι, γάρον, ὄξος, ἢ δὺσμασι Συριακοῖς, Ἀρράβικοῖς, ὥσπερ ὄντως νεκρὸν, ἐνταφιάζοντες. Καὶ γὰρ ὅτως αὐτῶν διαλυθέντων καὶ μαλαχθέντων καὶ τρόπον τινὰ κρευσαπέυντων ἔργον ἐστὶ τὴν πέψιν κρατῆσαι καὶ διακρατηθείσης δὲ δεινὰς βαρύτητας ἐμποιεῖ καὶ νοσῶδεις ἀπεψιάς.

* * * * *

Οὕτω τὸ πρῶτον ἄγριόν τι ξῶον ἐβρώθη καὶ κακῆργον εἶτα ὄρνις τις ἢ ἰχθύς ἐίλκυστο καὶ γεύομενον, ἔτο καὶ προμελετήσαν ἐν ἐκείνοις τὸ νικῆν ἐπὶ βῆν ἐργάτην ἦλθε, καὶ τὸ κοσμον πρὸβατον καὶ τὸν οἰκῆρον ἀλεκτρύονα· καὶ καταμικὸν ἔτο τὴν ἀπληστιάν τονώσαντες, ἐπίσφαγὰς ἀνθρώπων, καὶ φονεὺς καὶ πολέμους προῆλθον.

Πλουτ. περὶ τῆς σαρκοφαγίας.

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¹ In this Index of first lines are included those of the various scenes and cantos of the longer poems, and also several of lyrics in the text of those poems. In the examples of lyric drama which Shelley's works include there are numerous choruses and lyric movements, not following any express break, and yet opening fresh subjects so markedly, that the first lines of them form landmarks

quite as distinct as the first lines of the shorter poems. It has been thought useful to include these in the present index, and also to insert the first lines of various fragments which have stood independently in other editions, but are now connected with other fragments. The lines which are on these grounds not strictly first lines are distinguished by asterisks (*).

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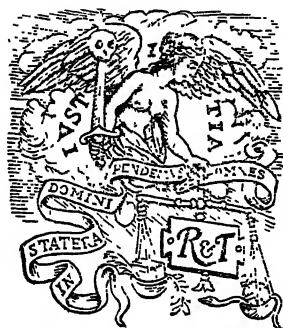
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